POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

BY

MR. JOHN GAY.

VOLUME II.

GLASGOW,

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EPISTLES

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

EPISTLE I.

TO A

LADY.

OCCASIONED BY THE ARRIVAL OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS.

MADAM, to all your cenſures I ſubmit,
And frankly own I ſhould long ſince have writ:
You told me, ſilence would be thought a crime,
And kindly ſtrove to teaze me into rhyme:
No more let trifling themes your muſe employ,
Nor laviſh verſe to paint a female toy:
No more on plains with rural damſels ſport,
But ſing the glories of the Britiſh court.
By your commands and inclination ſway'd,
I call'd th' unwilling muſes to my aid;
Reſolv'd to write, the noble theme I choſe,
And to the princeſs thus the poem roſe.
'Aid me, bright Phoebus; aid, ye ſacred Nine;
'Exalt my genius, and my verſe refine.
'My ſtrains with Carolina's name I grace,
'The lovely parent of our royal race.

'Breathe ſoft, ye winds, ye waves in ſilence ſleep;
'Let proſp'rous breezes wanton o'er the deep,
'Swell the white ſails, and with the ſtreamers play,
'To waft her gently o'er the watry way.
Here I to Neptune form'd a pompous pray'r,
To rein the winds, and guard the royal fair;
Bid the blue Tritons ſound their twiſted ſhells,
And call the Nereids from their pearly cells.
Thus my warm zeal had drawn the muſe along,
Yet knew no method to conduct her ſong:
I then reſolv'd ſome model to purſue,
Perus'd French critics, and began anew.
Long open panegyric drags at beſt,
And praiſe is only praiſe when well addreſs'd.
Straight Horace for ſome lucky ode I ſought,
And all along I trac'd him thought by thought:
This new performance to a friend I ſhow'd;
For ſhame, ſays he, what, imitate an ode!
I'd rather ballads write, and Grubſtreet lays,
Than pillage Caeſar for my patron's praiſe:
One common fate all imitators ſhare,
To ſave mince-pies, and cap the grocer's ware.
Vex'd at the charge, I to the flames commit
Rhymes, ſimiles, Lords' names, and ends of wit;
In blotted ſtanza's ſcraps of odes expire,
And fuſtian mounts in pyramids of fire.
Ladies, to you I next inſcrib'd my lay,
And writ a letter in familiar way:
For ſtill impatient till the princeſs came,
You from deſcription wiſh'd to know the dame.
Each day my pleaſing labour larger grew,
For ſtill new graces open'd to my view.
Twelve lines ran on to introduce the theme,
And then I thus purſu'd the growing ſcheme.

'Beauty and wit were ſure by nature join'd,
'And charms are emanations of the mind;
'The ſoul tranſpiercing through the ſhining frame,
'Forms all the graces of the princely dame:
'Benevolence her converſation guides,
'Smiles on her cheek, and in her eye reſides.
'Such harmony upon her tongue is found,
'As ſoftens Engliſh to Italian ſound:
'Yet in thoſe ſounds ſuch ſentiments appear,
'As charm the judgment, while they ſooth the ear.
'Religion's chearful flame her boſom warms,
'Calms all her hours, and brightens all her charms.
'Henceforth, ye fair, at chapel mind your pray'rs,
'Nor catch your lovers' eyes with artful airs;
'Reſtrain your looks, kneel more, and whiſper leſs,
'Nor moſt devoutly criticize on dreſs.
'From her form all your characters of life,
'The tender mother, and the faithful wife.
'Oft have I ſeen her little infant-train,
'The lovely promiſe of a future reign;
'Obſerv'd with pleaſure ev'ry dawning grace,
'And all the mother op'ning in their face,
'The ſun ſhall add new honours to the line,
'And early with paternal virtues ſhine;
'When he the tale of Audenard repeats,
'His little heart with emulation beats;
'With conqueſts yet to come his boſom glows,
'He dreams of triumphs and of vanquiſh'd foes.
'Each year with arts ſhall ſtore his rip'ning brain,
'And from his grandſire he ſhall learn to reign.
Thus far I'd gone: propitious riſing gales
Now bid the ſailor hoiſt the ſwelling ſails.
Fair Carolina lands; the cannons roar,
White Albion's cliffs reſound from ſhore to ſhore,

Behold the bright original appear,
All praiſe is faint when Carolina's near.
Thus to the nation's joy, but poet's coſt,
The princeſs came, and my new plan was loſt.
Since all my ſchemes were balk'd, my laſt reſort,
I left the muſes to frequent the court;
Penſive each night, from room to room I walk'd,
To one I bow'd, and with another talk'd;
Enquir'd what news, or ſuch a lady's name,
And did the next day, and the next, the ſame.
Places, I found, were daily given away,
And yet no friendly Gazette mention'd Gay.
I ask'd a friend what method to purſue;
He cry'd, I want a place as well as you.
Another ask'd me, why I had not writ;
A poet owes his fortune to his wit.
Straight I reply'd, with what a courtly grace,
Flows eaſy verſe from him that has a place!
Had Virgil ne'er at court improv'd his ſtrains,
He ſtill had ſung of flocks and homely ſwains;
And had not Horace ſweet preferment found,
The Roman lyre had never learnt to ſound.
Once ladies fair in homely guiſe I ſung,
And with their names wild woods and mountains rung.
Oh, teach me now to ſtrike a ſofter ſtrain!
The court refines the language of the plain.
You muſt, cries one, the miniſtry rehearſe,
And with each patriot's name prolong your verſe:
But ſure this truth to poets ſhould be known,
That praiſing all alike, is praiſing none.
Another told me, if I wiſh'd ſucceſs,
To ſome diſtinguiſh'd lord I muſt addreſs;
One whoſe high virtues ſpeak his noble blood,
One always zealous for his country's good;

Where valour and ſtrong eloquence unite,
In council cautious, reſolute in fight;
Whoſe gen'rous temper prompts him to defend,
And patronize the man that wants a friend.
You have, 'tis true, the noble patron ſhown,
But I, alas! am to Argyle unknown.
Still ev'ry one I met in this agreed,
That writing was my method to ſucceed;
But now preferments ſo poſſeſs'd my brain,
That ſcarce I could produce a ſingle ſtrain;
Indeed I ſometimes hammer'd out a line,
Without connection as without deſign.
One morn upon the princeſs this I writ,
An epigram that boaſts more truth than wit.
' The pomp of titles eaſy faith might ſhake,
' She ſcorn'd an empire for religion's ſake:
' For this, on earth, the Britiſh crown was given,
' And an immortal crown decreed in heav'n.

Again, while George's virtues rais'd my thought,
The following lines prophetic fancy wrought.
' Methinks I ſee ſome bard, whoſe heav'nly rage
' Shall riſe in ſong, and warm a future age;
' Look back through time, and, rapt in wonder, trace
' The glorious ſeries of the Brunſwick race.
' From the firſt George theſe godlike kings deſcend,
' A line which only with the world ſhall end.
' The next a gen'rous prince renown'd in arms,
' And bleſs'd, long bleſs'd, in Carolina's charms;
' From theſe the reſt. 'tis thus ſecure in peace,
' We plow the fields, and reap the year's increaſe;
' Now Commerce, wealthy goddeſs, rears her head,
' And bids Britannia's fleets their canvas ſpread;

'Unnumber'd ſhips the peopled ocean hide,
'And wealth returns with each revolving tide.
Here paus'd the ſullen muſe, in haſte I dreſs'd,
And through the croud of needy courtiers preſs'd;
Though unſucceſsful, happy whilſt I ſee,
Thoſe eyes that glad a nation, ſhine on me.

EPISTLE II.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE

EARL OF BURLINGTON.

A JOURNEY TO EXETER.

WHILE you, my Lord, bid ſtately piles aſcend,
Or in your Chiſwick bow'rs enjoy your friend;
Where Pope unloads the boughs within his reach,
The purple vine, blue plumb, and bluſhing peach;
I journey far——you know fat bards might tire,
And, mounted, ſent me forth your truſty ſquire.
'Twas on the day that city dames repair
To take their weekly doſe of Hide-park air;
When forth we trot: no carts the road infeſt,
For ſtill on Sundays country horſes reſt.
Thy gardens, Kenſington, we leave unſeen;
Through Hammerſmith jog on to Turnham-green:
That Turnham-green, which dainty pigeons fed,
But feeds no more: for *Solomon is dead.
Three duſty miles reach Branford's tedious town,
For dirty ſtreet, and white-leg'd chickens known:

* *A man lately famous for feeding pigeons at Turnham-green.*

Thence o'er wide ſhrubby heaths and furrow'd lanes,
We come, where Thames divides the meads of Stanes.
We ferry'd o'er; for late the winter's flood
Shook her frail bridge, and tore her piles of wood.
Prepar'd for war, now Bagſhot-heath we croſs,
Where broken gameſters oft' repair their loſs.
At Hartley-row the foaming bit we preſs,
While the fat landlord welcom'd ev'ry gueſt.
Supper was ended, healths the glaſſes crown'd,
Our hoſt extoll'd his wine at ev'ry round,
Relates the juſtices late meeting there,
How many bottles drank, and what their chear;
What lords had been his gueſts in days of yore,
And prais'd their wiſdom much, their drinking more.
Let travellers the morning vigils keep;
The morning roſe; but we lay faſt aſleep.
Twelve tedious miles we bore the ſultry ſun,
And Popham-lane was ſcarce in ſight by one:
The ſtragling village harbour'd thieves of old,
'Twas here the ſtage-coach laſs reſign'd her gold;
That gold which had in London purchas'd gowns,
And ſent her home a belle to country towns.
But robbers haunt no more the neighbouring wood;
Here unown'd infants find their daily food;
For ſhould the maiden-mother nurſe her ſon,
'Twould ſpoil her match, when her good name is gone.
Our jolly hoſteſs nineteen children bore,
Nor fail'd her breaſt to ſuckle nineteen more.
Be juſt, ye prudes, wipe off the long arrear;
Be virgins ſtill in town, but mothers here.
Sutton we paſs, and leave her ſpacious down,
And with the ſetting ſun reach Stockbridge town.
O'er our parch'd tongue the rich metheglin glides,
And the red dainty trout our knife divides.

Sad melancholy ev'ry viſage wears;
What, no election come in ſeven long years!
Of all our race of mayors, ſhall Snow alone
Be by Sir Richard's dedication known?
Our ſtreets no more with tides of ale ſhall float,
Nor coblers feaſt three years upon one vote.
Next morn, twelve miles led o'er th' unbounded plain,
Where the clok'd ſhepherd guides his fleecy train.
No leafy bow'rs a noonday ſhelter lend,
Nor from the chilly dews at night defend:
With wondrous art he counts the ſtragling flock,
And by the ſun informs you what's o'clock.
How are our ſhepherds fall'n from ancient days!
No Amaryllis chaunts alternate lays;
From her no liſt'ning echos learn to ſing,
Nor with his reed the jocund valleys ring.
Here ſheep the paſture hide, there harveſts bend,
See Sarum ſteeple o'er yon hill aſcend;
Our horſes faintly trot, beneath the heat,
And our keen ſtomachs know the hour to eat.
Who can forſake thy walls, and not admire
The proud cathedral, and the lofty ſpire?
What ſempſtreſs has not prov'd thy ſciſſars good?
From hence firſt came th' intriguing riding-hood.
Amid *three boarding-ſchools well-ſtock'd with miſſes,
Shall three knights-errant ſtarve for want of kiſſes?
O'er the green turf the miles ſlide ſwift away,
And Blandford ends the labours of the day,
The morning roſe; the ſupper reck'ning paid,
And our due fees diſcharg'd to man and maid,
The ready oſtly near the ſtirrup ſtands,
And as we mount, our half-pence load his hands.

* *There are three boarding-ſchools in this town.*

Now the ſteep hill fair Dorcheſter o'erlooks,
Border'd by meads, and waſh'd by ſilver brooks.
Here ſleep my two companions eyes ſuppreſt,
And propt in elbow-chairs they ſnoring reſt:
I weary ſit, and with my pencil trace
Their painful poſtures, and their eyeleſs face;
Then dedicate each glaſs to ſome fair name,
And on the ſaſh the diamond ſcrawls my flame.
Now o'er true Roman way our horſes ſound,
Graevius would kneel, and kiſs the ſacred ground.
On either ſide low fertile valleys lye,
The diſtant proſpects tire the trav'ling eye.
Through Bridport's ſtony lanes our rout we take,
And the proud ſteep deſcend to Morcombe's lake.
As hearſes paſs'd, our landlord robb'd the pall,
And with the mournful ſcutcheon hung his hall.
On unadulterate wine we here regale,
And ſtrip the lobſter of his ſcarlet mail.

We climb the hills when ſtarry night aroſe,
And Axminſter affords a kind repoſe.
The maid ſubdu'd by fees, her trunk unlocks,
And gives the cleanly aid of dowlas ſmocks.
Mean time our ſhirts her buſy fingers rub,
While the ſoap lathers o'er the foaming tub.
If women's geer ſuch pleaſing dreams incite,
Lend us your ſmocks, ye damſels, ev'ry night!
We riſe, our beards demand the barber's art:
A female enters, and performs the part.
The weighty golden chain adorns her neck,
And three gold rings her skilful hand bedeck:
Smooth o'er our chin her eaſy fingers move,
Soft as when Venus ſtrok'd the beard of Jove.

Now from the ſteep, 'midſt ſcatter'd farms and groves,
Our eye through Honiton's fair valley roves.

Behind us ſoon the buſy town we leave,
Where fineſt lace induſtrious laſſes weave.
Now ſwelling clouds roll'd on; the rainy load
Stream'd down our hats, and ſmok'd along the road;
When (O bleſt ſight!) a friendly ſign we ſpy'd,
Our ſpurs are ſlacken'd from the horſes ſide;
For ſure a civil hoſt the houſe commands,
Upon whoſe ſign this courteous motto ſtands.
' This is the ancient hand and eke the pen;
' Here is for horſes hay, and meat for men.
How rhyme would flouriſh, did each ſon of fame
Know his own genius, and direct his flame!
Then he, that could not epic flights rehearſe,
Might ſweetly mourn in elegiac verſe.
But were his muſe for elegy unfit,
Perhaps a diſtich might not ſtrain his wit;
If epigram offend, his harmleſs lines
Might in gold letters ſwing on ale-houſe ſigns.
Then Hobbinol might propagate his bays,
And Tuttle-fields record his ſimple lays;
Where rhymes like theſe might lure the nurſes eyes,
While gaping infants ſquawl for farthing pies.
' Treat here, ye ſhepherds blythe, your damſels ſweet,
' For pies and cheeſecakes are for damſels meet.
Then Maurus in his proper ſphere might ſhine,
And theſe proud numbers grace great William's ſign.
' * This is the man, this the Naſſovian, whom
' I nam'd the brave deliverer to come.
But now the driving gales ſuſpend the rain,
We mount our ſteeds, and Devon's city gain.
Hail, happy native land!——but I forbear,
What other counties muſt with envy hear.

* *Prince Arthur, book 5.*

EPISTLE III.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PULTENEY, Esq;

PULT'NEY, methinks you blame my breach of word;
What, cannot Paris one poor page afford?
Yes, I can ſagely, when the times are paſt,
Laugh at thoſe follies which I ſtrove to taſte,
And each amuſement, which we ſhar'd, review,
Pleas'd with meer talking, ſince I talk to you,
But how ſhall I deſcribe in humble proſe,
Their balls, aſſemblies, operas and beaus?
In proſe, you cry! oh no, the muſe muſt aid,
And leave Parnaſſus for the Tuillerie's ſhade;
Shall he (who late Britannia's city trod,
And led the draggled muſe, with pattens ſhod,
Through dirty lanes, and alley's doubtful ways)
Refuſe to write, when Paris asks his lays!
Well then, I'll try. deſcend, ye beauteous Nine,
In all the colours of the rainbow ſhine.
Let ſparkling ſtars your neck and ear adorn,
Lay on the bluſhes of the crimſon morn,

So may ye balls and gay aſſemblies grace,
And at the opera claim the foremoſt place.
Trav'lers ſhould ever fit expreſſion chuſe,
Nor with low phraſe the lofty theme abuſe.
When they deſcribe the ſtate of eaſtern lords,
Pomp and magnificence ſhould ſwell their words;
And when they paint the ſerpent's ſcaly pride,
Their lines ſhould hiſs, their numbers ſmoothly ſlide:
But they, unmindful of poetic rules,
Deſcribe alike Mockaws, and Great-Moguls.
Dampier would thus, without ill-meaning ſatire,
Dreſs forth in ſimple ſtyle the Petit-maitre.
'In Paris, there's a race of animals,
'(I've ſeen them at their operas and balls,)
'They ſtand erect, they dance when-e'er they walk,
'Monkeys in action, perroquets in talk;
'They're crown'd with feathers, like the cockatoo,
'And, like camelions, daily change their hue;
'From patches juſtly plac'd they borrow graces,
'And with vermilion lacker o'er their faces,
'This cuſtom, as we viſibly diſcern,
'They, by frequenting ladies toilettes, learn,
Thus might the trav'ler eaſy truth impart.
Into the ſubject let me nobly ſtart!
How happy lives the man, how ſure to charm,
Whoſe knot embroider'd flutters down his arm?
On him the ladies caſt the yielding glance,
Sigh in his ſongs, and languiſh in his dance;
While wretched is the wit, contemn'd, forlorn,
Whoſe gummy hat no ſcarlet plumes adorn;
No broider'd flow'rs his worſted ancle grace,
Nor cane emboſs'd with gold directs his pace;
No lady's favour on his ſword is hung.
What, though Apollo dictate from his tongue,

His wit is ſpiritleſs and void of grace,
Who wants th' aſſurance of brocade and lace.
While the gay fop genteelly talks of weather,
The fair in raptures doat upon his feather;
Like a court lady though he write and ſpell,
His minuet ſtep was faſhion'd by * Marcell;
He dreſſes, fences. what avails to know?
For women chuſe their men, like ſilks, for ſhow.
Is this the thing, you cry, that Paris boaſts?
Is this the thing renown'd among our toaſts?
For ſuch a flutt'ring ſight we need not roam;
Our own aſſemblies ſhine with theſe at home.

Let us into the field of beauty ſtart;
Beauty's a theme that ever warm'd the heart.
Think not, ye fair, that I the ſex accuſe:
How ſhall I ſpare you, prompted by the muſe?
(The muſes all are Prudes) ſhe rails, ſhe frets,
Amidſt this ſprightly nation of Coquettes;
Yet let not us their looſe coquett'ry blame;
Women of ev'ry nation are the ſame.

You ask me, if Pariſian dames, like ours,
With rattling dice prophane the Sunday's hours;
If they the gameſter's pale-ey'd vigils keep,
And ſtake their honour while their husbands ſleep.
Yes, Sir, like Engliſh toaſts, the dames of France
Will riſque their income on a ſingle chance.
Nannette laſt night at tricking Pharaon play'd,
The cards the Taillier's ſliding hand obey'd;
To-day her neck no brilliant circle wears,
Nor the ray-darting pendant loads her ears.
Why does old Chloris an aſſembly hold?
Chloris each night divides the ſharper's gold.

* *A famous dancing-maſter.*

Corinna's cheek with frequent loſſes burns,
And no bold Trente le va her fortune turns.
Ah too raſh virgin! where's thy virtue flown?
She pawns her perſon for the ſharper's loan.
Yet who with juſtice can the fair upbraid,
Whoſe debts of honour are ſo duly paid?
But let me not forget the toilette's cares,
Where art each morn the languid cheek repairs:
This red's too pale, nor gives a diſtant grace;
Madame to-day puts on her opera face;
From this we ſcarce extract the milk-maid's bloom,
Bring the deep dye that warms acroſs the room:
Now flames her cheek, ſo ſtrong her charms prevail,
That on her gown the ſilken roſe looks pale!
Not but that France ſome native beauty boaſts,
Clermont and Charolois might grace our toaſts.
When the ſweet-breathing ſpring unfolds the buds,
Love flys the duſty town for ſhady woods.
Then Tottenham fields with roving beauty ſwarm,
And Hampſtead balls the city virgin warm,
Then Chelſea's meads o'erhear perfidious vows,
And the preſt graſs defrauds the grazing cows.
'Tis here the ſame; but in a higher ſphere,
For ev'n court ladies ſin in open air.
What cit with a gallant would truſt his ſpouſe
Beneath the tempting ſhade of Greenwich boughs?
What peer of France would let his dutcheſs rove,
Where Boulogne's cloſeſt woods invite to love?
But here no wife can blaſt her husband's fame,
Cuckold is grown an honourable name.
Stretch'd on the graſs the ſhepherd ſighs his pain,
And on the graſs what ſhepherd ſighs in vain?
On Chloe's lap here Damon lay'd along,
Melts with the languiſh of her am'rous ſong;

There Iris flies Palaemon through the glade,
Nor tips by chance——'till in the thickeſt ſhade;
Here Celimene defends her lips and breaſt,
For kiſſes are by ſtruggling cloſer preſt;
Alexis there with eager flame grows bold,
Nor can the nymph his wanton fingers hold;
Be wiſe, Alexis; what ſo near the road!
Hark, a coach rolls, and husbands are abroad!
Such were our pleaſures in the days of yore,
When am'rous Charles Britannia's ſcepter bore;
The nightly ſcene of joy the Park was made,
And love in couples peopled ev'ry ſhade.
But ſince at court the rural taſte is loſt,
What mighty ſums have velvet couches coſt!
Sometimes the Tuillerie's gawdy walk I love,
Where I through crowds of ruſtling manteau's rove;
As here from ſide to ſide my eyes I caſt,
And gaz'd on all the glitt'ring train that paſt,
Sudden a ſop ſteps forth before the reſt;
I knew the bold embroidery of his veſt.
He thus accoſts me with familiar air,
'Parbleu! on a fait cet habit en Angleterre!
'Quelle manche! ce galon eſt groſſiérement rangé,
'Voila quelque choſe de fort beau et degagé!
This ſaid: on his red heel he turns, and then
Hums a ſoft minuet, and proceeds agen.
'Well; now you've Paris ſeen, you'll frankly own
'Your boaſted London ſeems a country town;
'Has Chriſtianity yet reach'd your nation?
'Are churches built? are maſquerades in faſhion?
'Do daily ſoups your dinners introduce?
'Are muſic, ſnuff, and coaches yet in uſe?
Pardon me, Sir; we know the Paris mode,
And gather politeſſe from courts abroad.

Like you, our courtiers keep a num'rous train
To load their coach, and tradeſmen dun in vain.
Nor has religion left us in the lurch,
And, as in France, our vulgar croud the church;
Our ladies too ſupport the maſquerade,
The ſex by nature love th' intriguing trade.
Straight the vain fop in ign'rant rapture cries,
' Paris the barb'rous world will civilize!
Pray, Sir, point out among the paſſing band
The preſent beauties who the town command.
' See yonder dame; ſtrict virtue chills her breaſt,
' Mark in her eye demure the prude profeſt;
' That frozen boſom native fire muſt want,
' Which boaſts of conſtancy to one gallant!
' This next the ſpoils of fifty lovers wears,
' Rich Dandin's brilliant favours grace her ears;
' The necklace Florio's gen'rous flame beſtow'd,
' Clitander's ſparkling gems her finger load;
' But now, her charms grown cheap by conſtant uſe,
' She ſins for ſcarfs, clock'd ſtockings, knots, and ſhoes.
' This next, with ſober gate and ſerious leer,
' Wearies her knees with morn and ev'ning prayer;
' She ſcorns th' ignoble love of feeble pages,
' But with three abbots in one night engages.
' This with the cardinal her nights employs,
' Where holy ſinews conſecrate her joys.
' Why have I promis'd things beyond my power!
' Five aſſignations wait me at this hour,
' The ſprightly counteſs firſt my viſit claims,
' To-morrow ſhall indulge inferior dames.
' Pardon me, Sir; that thus I take my leave,
' Gay Florimella ſlily twitch'd my ſleeve.
Adieu, Monſieur—the opera hour draws near.
Not ſee the opera! all the world is there;

Where on the ſtage th' embroider'd youth of France
In bright array attract the female glance:
This languiſhes, this ſtruts to ſhow his mien,
And not a gold-clock'd ſtocking moves unſeen.
But hark! the full Orcheſtra ſtrike the ſtrings;
The hero ſtruts, and the whole audience ſings.
My jarring ear harſh grating murmurs wound,
Hoarſe and confus'd, like Babel's mingled ſound.
Hard chance had plac'd me near a noiſy throat,
That in rough quavers bellow'd ev'ry note.
Pray Sir, ſays I, ſuſpend a-while your ſong,
The opera's drown'd; your lungs are wond'rous ſtrong;
I wiſh to hear your Roland's ranting ſtrain,
While he with rooted foreſts ſtrows the plain.
Sudden he ſhrugs ſurprize, and anſwers quick,
'Monſieur apparement n'aime pas la muſique.
Then turning round, he join'd th' ungateful noiſe;
And the loud chorus thunder'd with his voice.
O ſooth me with ſome ſoft Italian air,
Let harmony compoſe my tortur'd ear!
When Anaſtaſia's voice commands the ſtrain,
The melting warble thrills through ev'ry vein;
Thought ſtands ſuſpenſe, and ſilence pleas'd attends,
While in her notes the heav'nly choir deſcends.
But you'll imagine I'm a Frenchman grown,
Pleas'd and content with nothing but my own,
So ſtrongly with this prejudice poſſeſt,
He thinks French muſic and French painting beſt.
Mention the force of learn'd Corelli's notes,
Some ſcraping fidler of their ball he quotes;
Talk of the ſpirit Raphael's pencil gives,
Yet warm with life whoſe ſpeaking picture lives;
Yes Sir, ſays he, in colour and deſign,
Rigaut and Raphael are extremely fine!

'Tis true his country's love transports his breast
With warmer zeal, than your old Greeks profest.
Ulysses lov'd his Ithaca of yore,
Yet that sage trav'ller left his native shore;
What stronger vertue in the Frenchman shines!
He to dear Paris all his life confines.
I'm not so fond. there are, I must confess,
Things which might make me love my country less.
I should not think my Britain had such charms,
If lost to learning, if enslav'd by arms;
France has her Richlieus and her Colberts known,
And then, I grant it, France in science shone;
We too, I own, without such aids may chance
In ignorance and pride to rival France.

But let me not forget Corneille, Racine,
Boileau's strong sense and Moliere's hum'rous scene.
Let Cambray's name be sung above the rest,
Whose maxims, Pult'ney, warm thy patriot breast;
In Mentor's precepts wisdom strong and clear
Dictates sublime, and distant nations hear.
Hear all ye princes, who the world controul,
What cares, what terrors haunt the tyrant's soul;
His constant train are anger, fear, distrust,
To be a king, is to be good and just;
His people he protects, their rights he saves,
And scorns to rule a wretched race of slaves.

Happy, thrice happy shall the monarch reign,
Where guardian laws despotic power restrain!
There shall the plough-share break the stubborn land,
And bending harvests tire the peasant's hand:
There liberty her settled mansion boasts,
There commerce plenty brings from foreign coasts.
O Britain, guard thy laws, thy rights defend,
So shall these blessings to thy sons descend!

You'll think 'tis time ſome other theme to chuſe,
And not with beaus and fops fatigue the muſe!
Should I let ſatyr looſe on Engliſh ground,
There fools of various character abound;
But here my verſe is to one race confin'd,
All Frenchmen are of Petit-maitre kind.

EPISTLE IV.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

PAUL METHUEN, Esq;

THAT, 'tis encouragement makes ſcience ſpread,
Is rarely practis'd, though 'tis often ſaid;
When learning droops and ſickens in the land,
What patron's found to lend a ſaving hand?
True gen'rous ſpirits proſp'rous vice deteſt,
And love to cheriſh virtue when diſtreſt;
But ere our mighty lords this ſcheme purſue,
Our mighty lords muſt think and act like you.
Why muſt we climb the Alpine mountain's ſides
To find the ſeat where harmony reſides?
Why touch we not ſo ſoft the ſilver lute,
The chearful haut-boy, and the mellow flute?
'Tis not th' Italian clime improves the ſound,
But there the patrons of her ſons are found.
Why flouriſh'd verſe in great Auguſtus' reign?
He and Maecenas lov'd the muſe's ſtrain.
But now that wight in poverty muſt mourn
Who was (O cruel ſtars!) a poet born.
Yet there are ways for authors to be great;
Write ranc'rous libels to reform the ſtate:

Or if you choose more sure and ready ways,
Spatter a minister with fulsome praise:
Launch out with freedom, flatter him enough;
Fear not, all men are dedication proof.
Be bolder yet, you must go farther still,
Dip deep in gall thy mercenary quill.
He who his pen in party quarrels draws,
Lists an hir'd bravo to support the cause;
He must indulge his patron's hate and spleen,
And stab the fame of those he ne'er has seen.
Why then should authors mourn their desp'rate case?
Be brave, do this, and then demand a place.
Why art thou poor? exert the gifts to rise,
And banish tim'rous virtue from thy eyes.
All this seems modern preface, where we're told
That wit is prais'd, but hungry lives and cold:
Against th' ungrateful age these authors roar,
And fansy learning starves because they're poor.
Yet why should learning hope success at court?
Why should our patriots virtue's cause support?
Why to true merit should they have regard?
They know that virtue is its own reward.
Yet let not me of grievances complain,
Who (though the meanest of the muses train)
Can boast subscriptions to my humble lays,
And mingle profit with my little praise.
Ask painting, why she loves Hesperian air.
Go view, she cries, my glorious labours there;
There in rich palaces I reign in state,
And on the temple's lofty domes create.
The nobles view my works with knowing eyes,
They love the science, and the painter prize.
Why didst thou, Kent, forgo thy native land,
To emulate in picture Raphael's hand?

Think'ſt thou for this to raiſe thy name at home?
Go back, adorn the palaces of Rome;
There on the walls let thy juſt labours ſhine,
And Raphael live again in thy deſign.
Yet ſtay awhile; call all thy genius forth,
For Burlington unbiaſs'd knows thy worth;
His judgment in thy maſter-ſtrokes can trace
Titian's ſtrong fire and Guido's ſofter grace;
But, oh conſider, ere thy works appear,
Canſt thou unhurt the tongue of envy hear?
Cenſure will blame, her breath was ever ſpent
To blaſt the laurels of the eminent.
While Burlington's proportion'd columns riſe,
Does not he ſtand the gaze of envious eyes?
Doors, windows are condemn'd by paſſing fools,
Who know not that they damn Palladio's rules.
If Chandois with a lib'ral hand beſtow,
Cenſure imputes it all to pomp and ſhow;
When, if the motive right were underſtood,
His daily pleaſure is in doing good.

Had Pope with groveling numbers fill'd his page,
Dennis had never kindled into rage.
'Tis the ſublime that hurts the critic's eaſe;
Write nonſenſe and he reads and ſleeps in peace.
Were Prior, Congreve, Swift and Pope unknown,
Poor ſlander-ſelling Curll would be undone.
He who would free from malice paſs his days,
Muſt live obſcure, and never merit praiſe.
But let this tale to valiant virtue tell
The daily perils of deſerving well.

A crow was ſtrutting o'er the ſtubbled plain,
Juſt as a lark deſcending clos'd his ſtrain.
The crow beſpoke him thus with ſolemn grace,
Thou moſt accompliſh'd of the feather'd race,

What force of lungs! how clear! how ſweet you ſing!
And no bird ſoars upon a ſtronger wing.
The lark, who ſcorn'd ſoft flatt'ry, thus replies,
True, I ſing ſweet, and on ſtrong pinion riſe;
Yet let me paſs my life from envy free,
For what advantage are theſe gifts to me?
My ſong confines me to the wiry cage,
My flight provokes the falcon's fatal rage.
But as you paſs I hear the fowlers ſay,
To ſhoot at crows is powder flung away.

TALES.

TALES.

An Anſwer to the SOMPNER's Prologue of CHAUCER.

IN IMITATION OF CHAUCER'S STYLE.

THE Sompner leudly hath his prologue told,
And ſaine on the freers his tale japing and bold;
How that in hell they ſearchen near and wide,
And ne one freer in all thilke place eſpyde,
But lo! the devil turn'd his erſe about,
And twenty thouſand freers wend in and out.
By which in Jeoffrys rhyming it appears,
The devil's belly is the hive of freers.
Now liſtneth lordings! forthwith ye ſhall hear,
What happened at a houſe in Lancaſhire.
A miſere that had londs and tenement,
Who raketh from his villaines taxes and rent,
Owned a houſe which emptye long y-ſtood,
Full deeply ſited in a derkning wood,
Murmuring a ſhallow brook runneth along,
Mong the round ſtones it maken doleful ſong.
Now there ſpreaden a rumour that everich night
The rooms ihaunted been by many a ſprite,
The miller avoucheth, and all thereabout,
That they full oft' hearen the helliſh rout;

Some ſaine they hear the jingling of chains,
And ſome hath yheard the pſautries ſtraines,
At midnight ſome the heedleſs horſe imeet,
And ſome eſpien a corſe in a white ſheet,
And oother things, faye, elfin and elſe,
And ſhapes that fear createn to it ſelfe.
Now it ſo hapt, there was not ſerre away,
Of gray freers a fair and rich abbaye,
Where liven a freer ycleped Pere Thomas,
Who daren alone in derke through church-yerds paſs.
This freer would lye in thilke houſe all night,
In hope he might eſpyen a dreadful ſprite.
He taketh candle, beades, and holy watere,
And legends eke of ſaintes, and bookes of prayere.
He entreth the room, and looketh round about,
And haſpen the door to haſpen the goblin out.
The candle hath he put cloſe by the bed,
And in low tone his Ave Marye ſaid.
With water now beſprinkled hath the floore,
And maken croſs on key-hole of the doore.
Ne was there not a mouſe-hole in thilke place,
But he y-croſſed hath by God his grace;
He croſſed hath this, and eke he croſſed that,
With Benedicite and God knows what.
Now he goeth to bed and lieth adown,
When the clock had juſt ſtricken the twelfth ſoun.
Bethinketh hem now what the cauſe had ibeen,
Why many ſprites by mortals have been ſeen.
Hem remembreth how Dan Plutarch hath y-ſed
That Caeſar's ſprite came to Brute his bed;
Of chains that frighten erſt Artemidore,
The tales of Pline, Valere, and many more.
Hem thinketh that ſome murdere here been done,
And he mought ſee ſome bloodye ghoſt anone,

Or that ſome orphlines writings here be ſtor'd,
Or pot of gold laine deep beneath a board:
Or thinketh hem, if he mought ſee no ſprite,
The abbay mought buy this houſe cheap outright.
As hem thus thinketh, anone aſleep he lies,
Up ſtarten Sathanas with ſaucer eyes.
He turneth the freer upon his face downright,
Diſplaying his nether cheeks full broad and white.
Then quoth Dan Sathanas as he thwack'd him ſore,
Thou didſt forget to guard thy poſtern door.
There is an hole which hath not croſſed been:
Farewel, from whence I came, I creepen in.
Now plain it is ytellen in my verſe,
If devils in hell bear freers in their erſe,
On earth the devil in freers doth y-dwell;
Were there no freers, the devil mought keep in hell.

WORK FOR A COOPER.

A TALE.

A Man may lead a happy life,
Without that needful thing a wife:
This long have lusty abbots known,
Who ne'er knew spouses——of their own.
What though your house be clean and neat,
With couches, chairs, and beds compleat;
Though you each day invite a friend,
Though he should every dish commend,
On Bagshot-heath your mutton fed,
Your fowls at Brandford born and bred;
Though purest wine your cellars boast,
Wine worthy of the fairest toast;
Yet there are other things requir'd:
Ring, and let's see the maid you hir'd——
Bless me! those hands might hold a broom,
Twirle round a mop, and wash a room,
A batchelor his maid should keep,
Not for that servile use to sweep,
Let her his humour understand,
And turn to ev'ry thing her hand.
Get you a lass that's young and tight,
Whose arms are, like her apron, white;

What though her ſhift be ſeldom ſeen?
Let that though coarſe be always clean;
She might each morn your tea attend,
And on your wreſt your ruffle mend;
Then if you break a roguiſh jeſt,
Or ſqueeze her hand, or pat her breaſt,
She cries, oh dear Sir, don't be naught!
And bluſhes ſpeak her laſt night's fault.
To her your houſhold cares confide,
Let your key jingle at her ſide,
A footman's blunders teaſe and fret ye,
E'en while you chide you ſmile on Betty.
Diſcharge him then, if he's too ſpruce,
For Betty's for his maſter's uſe.

Will you your am'rous fancy balk,
For fear ſome prudiſh neighbour talk?
But you'll object, that you're afraid
Of the pert freedoms of a maid;
Beſides your wiſer heads will ſay,
That ſhe who turns her hand this way,
From one vice to another drawn,
Will lodge your ſilver ſpoons in pawn.
Has not the homely wrinkled jade
More need to learn the pilf'ring trade?
For love all Betty's wants ſupplies,
Laces her ſhoes, her manteau dyes,
All her ſtuff ſuits ſhe flings away,
And wears thread ſattin every day.

Who then a dirty drab would hire,
Brown as the hearth of kitchin fire?
When all muſt own, were Betty put
To the black duties of the ſlut,
As well ſhe ſcours or ſcrubs a floor,
And ſtill is good for ſomething more.

Thus to avoid the greater vice,
I knew a prieſt, of conſcience nice,
To quell his luſt for neighbour's ſpouſe,
Keep fornication in his houſe.
But you're impatient all this time,
Fret at my counſel, curſe my rhyme,
Be ſatisfy'd. I'll talk no more,
For thus my tale begins——Of yore
There dwelt at Blois a prieſt full fair,
With rolling eye and criſped hair,
His chin hung low, his brow was ſleek,
Plenty lay basking on his cheek,
Whole days at cloyſter-grates he ſat,
Ogled, and talk'd of this and that
So feelingly; the nuns lamented
That double bars were e'er invented.
If he the wanton wife confeſt
With downcaſt eye, and heaving breaſt;
He ſtrok'd her cheek to ſtill her fear,
And talk'd of ſins en Cavalier.
Each time enjoyn'd her penance mild,
And fondled on her like his child.
At ev'ry jovial goſſip's feaſt
Pere Bernard was a welcome gueſt,
Mirth ſuffer'd not the leaſt reſtraint,
He could at will ſhake off the ſaint:
Nor frown'd he when they freely ſpoke,
But ſhook his ſides, and took the joke;
Nor fail'd he to promote the jeſt,
And ſhar'd the ſins which they confeſt.
Yet that he might not always rome,
He kept conveniencies at home.
His maid was in the bloom of beauty,
Well limb'd for ev'ry ſocial duty;

He meddled with no houſhold cares,
To her conſign'd his whole affairs;
She of his ſtudy kept the keys,
For he was ſtudious——of his eaſe:
She had the power of all his locks,
Could rummage ev'ry cheſt and box,
Her honeſty ſuch credit gain'd,
Not e'en the cellar was reſtrain'd.

In troth it was a goodly ſhow,
Lin'd with full hogſheads all a-row;
One veſſel, from the rank remov'd,
Far dearer than the reſt he lov'd.
'Pour la bonne bouche' 'twas ſet aſide,
To all but choiceſt friends deny'd.
He now and then would ſend a quart,
To warm ſome wife's retentive heart,
Againſt confeſſion's ſullen hour:
Wine has all ſecrets in its power.
At common feaſts it had been waſte,
Nor was it fit for layman's taſte,
If monk or friar were his gueſt,
They drank it, for they know the beſt.
Nay, he at length ſo fond was grown,
He always drank it when——alone.

Who ſhall recount his civil labours,
In pious viſits to his neighbours?
Whene'er weak husbands went aſtray,
He gueſt their wives were in the way,
'Twas then his charity was ſhown,
He choſe to ſee them when alone.

Now was he bent on cuckoldom:
He knew friend Dennis was from home;
His wife (a poor neglected beauty,
Defrauded of a husband's duty)

Had often told him at confeſſion,
How hard ſhe ſtruggled 'gainſt tranſgreſſion.
He now reſolves, in heat of blood,
To try how firm her virtue ſtood.
He knew that wine (to love beſt aid)
Has oft' made bold the ſhamefac'd maid,
Taught her to romp, and take more freedoms,
Than nymphs train'd up at Smith's or Needham's.
A mighty bottle ſtraight he choſe,
Such as might give two friars their doſe:
Nannette he call'd: the cellar door
She ſtraight unlocks, deſcends before,
He follow'd cloſe. but when he ſpys
His fav'rite cask; with lifted eyes
And lifted hands aloud he crys.
Heigh day! my darling wine aſtoop!
It muſt, alas! have ſprung a hoop;
That there's a leak is paſt all doubt,
(Reply'd the maid)——I'll find it out.
She ſets the candle down in haſte,
Tucks her white apron round her waſte,
The hogſhead's mouldy ſide aſcends,
She ſtraddles wide, and downward bends;
So low ſhe ſtoops to ſeek the flaw,
Her coats roſe high, her maſter ſaw——
I ſee——he crys——(then claſpt her faſt)
The leak through which my wine has paſt.
Then all in haſte the maid deſcended,
And in a trice the leak was mended.
He found in Nannette all he wanted,
So Dennis' brows remain'd unplanted.
Ere ſince this time all luſty friars
(Warm'd with predominant deſires,

Whene'er the flesh with spirit quarrels)
Look on the sex as leaky barrels.
Beware of these, ye jealous spouses,
From such like coopers guard your houses;
For if they find not work at home,
For jobs through all the town they rome.

THE EQUIVOCATION.

A TALE.

AN abbot rich (whoſe taſte was good
Alike in ſcience and in food)
His biſhop had reſolv'd to treat;
The biſhop came, the biſhop eat;
'Twas ſilence, till their ſtomachs fail'd;
And now at heretics they rail'd;
What hereſy (the prelate ſaid)
Is in that church where prieſts may wed!
Do not we take the church for life?
But thoſe divorce her for a wife,
Like laymen keep her in their houſes,
And own the children of their ſpouſes.
Vile practices! the abbot cry'd,
For pious uſe we're ſet aſide!
Shall we take wives? marriage at beſt
Is but carnality profeſt.
Now as the biſhop took his glaſs,
He ſpy'd our abbot's buxom laſs
Who croſs'd the room, he mark'd her eye
That glow'd with love; his pulſe beat high.
Fye, father, fye (the prelate cries)
A maid ſo young! for ſhame, be wiſe.

Theſe indiſcretions lend a handle
To lewd lay tongues, to give us ſcandal;
For your vows ſake, this rule I give t'ye,
Let all your maids be turn'd of fifty.
The prieſt reply'd, I have not ſwerv'd,
But your chaſte precept well obſerv'd;
That laſs full twenty-five has told,
I've yet another who's as old;
Into one ſum their ages caſt;
So both my maids are fifty paſt.
The prelate ſmil'd, but durſt not blame;
For why? his lordſhip did the ſame.
Let thoſe who reprimand their brothers,
Firſt mend the faults they find in others.

A TRUE STORY OF AN APPARITION.

SCeptics (whoſe ſtrength of argument makes out
That wiſdom's deep inquiries end in doubt)
Hold this aſſertion poſitive and clear,
That ſprites are pure deluſions rais'd by fear.
Not that fam'd ghoſt, which in preſaging ſound
Call'd Brutus to Philippi's fatal ground;
Nor can Tiberius Gracchus' goary ſhade
Theſe ever-doubting diſputants perſuade.
Straight they with ſmiles reply; thoſe tales of old
By viſionary prieſts were made and told:
Oh might ſome ghoſt at dead of night appear,
And make you own conviction by your fear!
I know your ſneers my eaſy faith accuſe,
Which with ſuch idle legends ſcars the muſe:
But think not that I tell thoſe vulgar ſprites,
Which frighted boys relate on winter nights;
How cleanly milk-maids meet the fairy train,
How headleſs horſes drag the clinking chain,
Night-roaming ghoſts, by ſaucer eye-balls known,
The common ſpectres of each country town.

No, I ſuch fables can like you deſpiſe,
And laugh to hear theſe nurſe-invented lies.
Yet has not oft the fraudful guardian's fright
Compell'd him to reſtore an orphan's right?
And can we doubt that horrid ghoſts aſcend,
Which on the conſcious murd'rers ſteps attend?
Hear then, and let atteſted truth prevail,
From faithful lips I learnt the dreadful tale.

Where Arden's foreſt ſpreads its limits wide,
Whoſe branching paths the doubtful road divide,
A trav'ler took his ſolitary way;
When low beneath the hills was ſunk the day.
And now the skies with gath'ring darkneſs lour,
The branches ruſtle with the threaten'd ſhow'r;
With ſudden blaſts the foreſt murmurs loud,
Indented lightnings cleave the ſable cloud,
Thunder on thunder breaks, the tempeſt roars,
And heav'n diſcharges all its watry ſtores.
The wand'ring trav'ler ſhelter ſeeks in vain,
And ſhrinks and ſhivers with the beating rain;
On his ſteed's neck the ſlacken'd bridle lay,
Who choſe with cautious ſtep th' uncertain way;
And now he checks the rein, and halts to hear
If any noiſe foretold a village near.
At length from far a ſtream of light he ſees
Extend its level ray between the trees;
Thither he ſpeeds, and as he nearer came
Joyful he knew the lamp's domeſtic flame
That trembled through the window; croſs the way
Darts forth the barking cur, and ſtands at bay.

It was an antient lonely houſe, that ſtood
Upon the borders of the ſpacious wood;
Here towers and antique battlements ariſe,
And there in heaps the moulder'd ruin lies;

Some lord this manſion held in days of yore,
To chaſe the wolf, and pierce the foaming boar:
How chang'd, alas, from what it once had been!
'Tis now degraded to a public inn.
Straight he diſmounts, repeats his loud commands;
Swift at the gate the ready landlord ſtands;
With frequent cringe he bows, and begs excuſe,
His houſe was full, and ev'ry bed in uſe.
What not a garret, and no ſtraw to ſpare?
Why then the kitchin-fire and elbow-chair
Shall ſerve for once to nod away the night.
The kitchin ever is the ſervant's right,
Replies the hoſt; there, all the fire around,
The count's tir'd footmen ſnore upon the ground.
The maid, who liſten'd to this whole debate,
With pity learnt the weary ſtranger's fate.
Be brave, ſhe cries, you ſtill may be our gueſt,
Our haunted room was ever held the beſt;
If then your valour can the fright ſuſtain
Of rattling curtains and the clinking chain,
If your courageous tongue have power to talk,
When round your bed the horrid ghoſt ſhall walk;
If you dare ask it, why it leaves its tomb,
I'll ſee your ſheets well air'd, and ſhow the room.
Soon as the frighted maid her tale had told,
The ſtranger enter'd, for his heart was bold.
The damſel led him through a ſpacious hall,
Where ivy hung the half-demoliſh'd wall;
She frequent look'd behind, and chang'd her hue,
While fancy tipt the candle's flame with blue.
And now they gain'd the winding ſtairs aſcent,
And to the loneſome room of terrors went.
When all was ready ſwift retir'd the maid,
The watch-lights burn, tuckt warm in bed was laid

The hardy ſtranger, and attends the ſprite
Till his accuſtom'd walk at dead of night.
At firſt he hears the wind with hollow roar
Shake the looſe lock, and ſwing the creaking door;
Nearer and nearer draws the dreadful ſound
Of rattling chains, that dragg'd upon the ground:
When lo, the ſpectre came with horrid ſtride,
Approach'd the bed, and drew the curtains wide!
In human form the ghaſtful phantom ſtood,
Expos'd his mangled boſom dy'd with blood,
Then ſilent pointing to his wounded breaſt,
Thrice wav'd his hand. beneath the frighted gueſt
The bed-cords trembled, and with ſhudd'ring fear,
Sweat chill'd his limbs, high roſe his briſtled hair;
Then mutt'ring haſty pray'rs, he mann'd his heart,
And cry'd aloud; ſay, whence and who thou art.
The ſtalking ghoſt with hollow voice replys,
Three years are counted, ſince with mortal eyes
I ſaw the ſun, and vital air reſpir'd.
Like thee benighted, and with travel tir'd,
Within theſe walls I ſlept. O thirſt of gain!
See, ſtill the planks the bloody mark retain;
Stretch'd on this very bed, from ſleep I ſtart,
And ſee the ſteel impending o'er my heart;
The barb'rous hoſteſs held the lifted knife,
The floor ran purple with my guſhing life.
My treaſure now they ſeize, the golden ſpoil
They bury deep beneath the graſs-grown ſoil,
Far in the common field. be bold, ariſe,
My ſteps ſhall lead thee to the ſecret prize;
There dig and find; let that thy care reward:
Call loud on juſtice, bid her not retard
To puniſh murder; lay my ghoſt at reſt,
So ſhall with peace ſecure thy nights be bleſt;

And when beneath theſe boards my bones are found,
Decent inter them in ſome ſacred ground.

Here ceas'd the ghoſt. the ſtranger ſprings from bed,
And boldly follows where the phantom led;
The half-worn ſtony ſtairs they now deſcend,
Where paſſages obſcure their arches bend
Silent they walk; and now through groves they paſs,
Now through wet meads their ſteps imprint the graſs;
At length amidſt a ſpacious field they came:
There ſtops the ſpectre, and aſcends in flame.
Amaz'd he ſtood, no buſh, nor briar was found,
To teach his morning ſearch to find the ground;
What could he do? the night was hideous dark,
Fear ſhook his joints, and nature dropt the mark;
With that he ſtarting wak'd, and rais'd his head,
But found the golden mark was left in bed.
What is the ſtateſman's vaſt ambitious ſcheme,
But a ſhort viſion, and a golden dream?
Power, wealth, and title elevate his hope;
He wakes. but for a garter finds a rope.

THE

MAD-DOG.

A TALE.

A Prude, at morn and ev'ning prayer,
Had worn her velvet cuſhion bare;
Upward ſhe taught her eyes to roll,
As if ſhe watch'd her ſoaring ſoul;
And when devotion warm'd the croud,
None ſung, or ſmote her breaſt ſo loud:
Pale penitence had mark'd her face
With all the meagre ſigns of grace.
Her maſs-book was compleatly lin'd
With painted ſaints of various kind:
But when in ev'ry page ſhe view'd
Fine ladies who the fleſh ſubdu'd;
As quick her beads ſhe counted o'er,
She cry'd——ſuch wonders are no more!
She choſe not to delay confeſſion,
To bear at once a year's tranſgreſſion,
But ev'ry week ſet all things even,
And balanc'd her accounts with heav'n.
Behold her now in humble guiſe,
Upon her knees with downcaſt eyes
Before the prieſt: ſhe thus begins,
And ſobbing, blubbers forth her ſins.

Who could that tempting man reſiſt?
My virtue languiſh'd, as he kiſs'd;
I ſtrove, ——till I could ſtrive no longer?
How can the weak ſubdue the ſtronger?
The father ask'd her where and when?
How many? and what ſort of men?
By what degrees her blood was heated?
How oft' the frailty was repeated?
Thus have I ſeen a pregnant wench
All fluſh'd with guilt before the bench,
The judges (wak'd by wanton thought)
Dive to the bottom of her fault,
They leer, they ſimper at her ſhame,
And make her call all things by name.
And now to ſentence he proceeds,
Preſcribes how oft' to tell her beads;
Shows her what ſaints could do her good,
Doubles her faſts to cool her blood,
Eas'd of her ſins, and light as air,
Away ſhe trips; perhaps to prayer.
'Twas no ſuch thing. why then this haſte?
The clock has ſtruck, the hour is paſt,
And on the ſpur of inclination,
She ſcorn'd to bilk her aſſignation.
Whate'er ſhe did, next week ſhe came,
And piouſly confeſt the ſame;
The prieſt, who female frailties pity'd,
Firſt chid her, then her ſins remitted.
But did ſhe now her crime bemoan
In penitential ſheets alone?
And was no bold, no beaſtly fellow
The nightly partner of her pillow?
No, none; for the next time in the grove
A bank was conſcious of her love.

Confeſſion-day was come about,
And now again it all muſt out,
She ſeems to wipe her twinkling eyes,
What now, my child, the father cries.
Again, ſays ſhe!——with threatning looks,
He thus the proſtrate dame rebukes.
Madam, I grant there's ſomething in it,
That virtue has th' unguarded minute;
But pray now tell me what are whores,
But women of unguarded hours?
Then you muſt ſure have loſt all ſhame,
What ev'ry day, and ſtill the ſame,
And no fault elſe! 'tis ſtrange to find
A woman to one ſin confin'd!
Pride is this day her darling paſſion,
The next day ſlander is in faſhion;
Gaming ſucceeds; if fortune croſſes,
Then virtue's mortgag'd for her loſſes;
By uſe her fav'rite vice ſhe loaths,
And loves new follies like new cloaths:
But you, beyond all thought, unchaſte,
Have all ſin center'd near your waſte!
Whence is this appetite ſo ſtrong?
Say, Madam, did your mother long?
Or is it lux'ry and high diet
That wont let virtue ſleep in quiet?
She tells him now with meekeſt voice,
That ſhe had never err'd by choice,
Nor was there known a virgin chaſter,
Till ruin'd by a ſad diſaſter.
That ſhe a fav'rite lap-dog had,
Which, (as ſhe ſtroak'd and kiſs'd) grew mad;
And on her lip a wound indenting,
Firſt ſet her youthful blood fermenting.

The prieſt reply'd with zealous fury,
You ſhould have ſought the means to cure ye.
Doctors by various ways we find,
Treat theſe diſtempers of the mind.
Let gaudy ribbands be deny'd
To her, who raves with ſcornful pride;
And if religion crack her notions,
Lock up her volumes of devotions;
But if for man her rage prevail,
Bar her the ſight of creatures male.
Or elſe to cure ſuch venom'd bites,
And ſet the ſhatter'd thoughts arights;
They ſend you to the ocean's ſhore,
And plunge the patient o'er and o'er.
The dame reply'd; alas! in vain
My kindred forc'd me to the main;
Naked and in the face of day:
Look not, ye fiſhermen, this way!
What virgin had not done as I did?
My modeſt hand, by nature guided,
Debarr'd at once from human eyes
The ſeat where female honour lies,
And though thrice dipt from top to toe,
I ſtill ſecur'd the poſt below,
And guarded it with graſp ſo faſt,
Not one drop through my fingers paſt;
Thus owe I to my baſhful care
That all the rage is ſettled there.
Weigh well the projects of mankind;
Then tell me, reader, canſt thou find
The man from madneſs wholly free?
They all are mad——ſave you and me.
Do not the ſtateſmen, fop and wit
By daily follies prove they're bit?

And when the briny cure they try'd,
Some part ſtill kept above the tide?
  Some men (when drench'd beneath the wave)
High o'er their heads their fingers ſave:
Thoſe hands by mean extortion thrive,
Or in the pocket lightly dive;
Or more expert in pilf'ring vice,
They burn and itch to cog the dice.
  Plunge in a courtier; ſtraight his fears
Direct his hands to ſtop his ears.
And now truth ſeems a grating noiſe,
He loves the ſland'rer's whiſp'ring voice;
He hangs on flatt'ry with delight,
And thinks all fulſom praiſe is right.
  All women dread a wat'ry death:
They ſhut their lips to hold their breath,
And though you duck them ne'er ſo long,
Not one ſalt drop e'er wets their tongue;
'Tis hence they ſcandal have at will,
And that this member ne'er lies ſtill.

ECLOGUES.

THE BIRTH OF THE SQUIRE, AN ECLOGUE.

IN IMITATION OF THE POLLIO OF VIRGIL.

YE ſylvan muſes, loſtier ſtrains recite,
Not all in ſhades, and humble cotts delight.
Hark! the bells ring; along the diſtant grounds
The driving gales convey the ſwelling ſounds;
Th' attentive ſwain, forgetful of his work,
With gaping wonder, leans upon his fork.
What ſudden news alarms the waking morn?
To the glad Squire a hopeful heir is born.
Mourn, mourn, ye ſtags, and all the beaſts of chaſe,
This hour deſtruction brings on all your race:
See the pleas'd tenents duteous off'rings bear,
Turkeys and geeſe, and grocers ſweeteſt ware;
With the new health the pond'rous tankard flows,
And old October reddens ev'ry noſe.
Beagles and ſpaniels round his cradle ſtand,
Kiſs his moiſt lip and gently lick his hand;
He joys to hear the ſhrill horn's echoing ſounds,
And learns to liſp the names of all the hounds.

With frothy ale to make his cup o'erflow,
Barley ſhall in paternal acres grow;
The bee ſhall ſip the fragrant dew from flow'rs,
To give metheglin for his morning hours;
For him the cluſtring hop ſhall climb the poles,
And his own orchard ſparkle in his bowls.
His ſire's exploits he now with wonder hears,
The monſtrous tales indulge his greedy ears;
How when youth ſtrung his nerves and warm'd his veins,
He rod the mighty Nimrod of the plains:
He leads the ſtaring infant through the hall,
Points out the horny ſpoils that grace the wall;
Tells, how this ſtag through three whole countys fled,
What rivers ſwam, where bay'd, and where he bled.
Now he the wonders of the fox repeats,
Deſcribes the deſp'rate chaſe, and all his cheats;
How in one day beneath his furious ſpeed,
He tir'd ſeven courſers of the fleeteſt breed;
How high the pale he leapt, how wide the ditch,
When the hound tore the haunches of the * witch!
Theſe ſtories which deſcend from ſon to ſon,
The forward boy ſhall one day make his own.
[Ah, too fond mother, think the time draws nigh,
That calls the darling from thy tender eye;
How ſhall his ſpirit brook the rigid rules,
And the long tyranny of grammar ſchools?
Let younger brothers o'er dull authors plod,
Laſh'd into Latin by the tingling rod;
No, let him never feel that ſmart diſgrace:
Why ſhould he wiſer prove than all his race?

* *The moſt common accident to ſportſmen; to hunt a witch in the ſhape of a hare.*

When rip'ning youth with down o'erſhades his chin,
And ev'ry female eye incites to ſin;
The milk-maid (thoughtleſs of her future ſhame)
With ſmacking lip ſhall raiſe his guilty flame;
The dairy, barn, the hay-loft and the grove
Shall oft' be conſcious of their ſtolen love.
But think, Priſcilla, on that dreadful time,
When pangs and watry qualms ſhall own thy crime;
How wilt thou tremble when thy nipple's preſt,
To ſee the white drops bathe thy ſwelling breaſt!
Nine moons ſhall publicly divulge thy ſhame,
And the young Squire foreſtall a father's name.

When twice twelve times the reaper's ſweeping hand
With levell'd harveſts has beſtrown the land,
On fam'd St. Hubert's feaſt, his winding horn
Shall cheer the joyful hound and wake the morn!
This memorable day his eager ſpeed
Shall urge with bloody heel the riſing ſteed.
O check the foamy bit, nor tempt thy fate,
Think on the murders of a five-bar gate!
Yet prodigal of life, the leap he tries,
Low in the duſt his groveling honour lies,
Headlong he falls, and on the rugged ſtone
Diſtorts his neck, and cracks the collar-bone;
O vent'rous youth, thy thirſt of game allay,
Mayſt thou ſurvive the perils of this day!
He ſhall ſurvive; and in late years be ſent
To ſnore away debates in Parliament.

The time ſhall come, when his more ſolid ſenſe
With nod important ſhall the laws diſpenſe;
A juſtice with grave juſtices ſhall ſit,
He praiſe their wiſdom, they admire his wit.
No greyhound ſhall attend the tenent's pace,
No ruſty gun the farmer's chimney grace;

Salmons ſhall leave their covers void of fear,
Nor dread the thieviſh net or triple ſpear;
Poachers ſhall tremble at his awful name,
Whom vengeance now o'ertakes for murder'd game.
Aſſiſt me, Bacchus, and ye drunken pow'rs,
To ſing his friendſhips and his midnight hours!
Why doſt thou glory in thy ſtrength of beer,
Firm cork'd, and mellow'd till the twentieth year;
Brew'd or when Phoebus warms the fleecy ſign,
Or when his languid rays in Scorpio ſhine.
Think on the miſchiefs which from hence have ſprung!
It arms with curſes dire the wrathful tongue;
Foul ſcandal to the lying lip affords,
And prompts the mem'ry with injurious words.
O where is wiſdom, when by this o'erpower'd?
The ſtate is cenſur'd, and the maid deflower'd!
And wilt thou ſtill, O Squire, brew ale ſo ſtrong?
Hear then the dictates of prophetic ſong.
Methinks I ſee him in his hall appear,
Where the long table floats in clammy beer,
'Midſt mugs and glaſſes ſhatter'd o'er the floor,
Dead-drunk his ſervile crew ſupinely ſnore;
Triumphant, o'er the proſtrate brutes he ſtands,
The mighty bumper trembles in his hands;
Boldly he drinks, and like his glorious ſires,
In copious gulps of potent ale expires.

THE TOILETTE,

A TOWN ECLOGUE.

LYDIA.

NOW twenty ſprings had cloath'd the Park with green,
Since Lydia knew the bloſſom of fifteen;
No lovers now her morning hours moleſt,
And catch her at her toilette half undreſt;
The thund'ring knocker wakes the ſtreet no more,
No chairs, no coaches croud her ſilent door;
Her midnights once at cards and Hazard fled,
Which now, alas! ſhe dreams away in bed.
Around her wait Shocks, monkeys and mockaws,
To fill the place of fops, and perjur'd beaus;
In theſe ſhe views the mimickry of man,
And ſmiles when grinning Pug gallants her fan;
When Poll repeats, the ſounds deceive her ear,
For ſounds, like his, once told her Damon's care.
With theſe alone her tedious mornings paſs;
Or at the dumb devotion of her glaſs,
She ſmooths her brow, and frizles forth her hairs,
And fancies youthful dreſs gives youthful airs;

With crimſon wool ſhe fixes every grace,
That not a bluſh can diſcompoſe her face.
Reclin'd upon her arm ſhe penſive ſate,
And curs'd th' inconſtancy of youth too late.
O youth! O ſpring of life! for ever loſt!
No more my name ſhall reign the fav'rite toaſt,
On glaſs no more the di'mond grave my name,
And rhymes miſpell'd record a lover's flame:
Nor ſhall ſide-boxes watch my reſtleſs eyes,
And as they catch the glance in rows ariſe
With humble bows; nor white-glov'd beaus encroach
In crouds behind, to guard me to my coach.
Ah hapleſs nymph! ſuch conqueſts are no more,
For Chloe's now what Lydia was before!
'Tis true, this Chloe boaſts the peach's bloom,
But does her nearer whiſper breathe perfume?
I own her taper ſhape is form'd to pleaſe;
Yet if you ſaw her unconfin'd by ſtays!
She doubly to fifteen may make pretence,
Alike we read it in her face and ſenſe.
Her reputation! but that never yet
Could check the freedoms of a young coquet.
Why will ye then, vain ſops, her eyes believe?
Her eyes can, like your perjur'd tongues, deceive.
What ſhall I do? how ſpend the hateful day?
At chapel ſhall I wear the morn away?
Who there frequents at theſe unmodiſh hours,
But antient matrons with their frizled tow'rs,
And gay religious maids? my preſence there
Amid that ſober train would own deſpair;
Nor am I yet ſo old; nor is my glance
As yet fixt wholly to devotion's trance.
Straight then I'll dreſs, and take my wonted range
Through ev'ry Indian ſhop, through all the Change;

Where the tall jar erects his coſtly pride,
With antic ſhapes in China's azure dy'd;
There careleſs lies the rich brocade unroll'd,
Here ſhines a cabinet with burniſh'd gold;
But then remembrance will my grief renew,
'Twas there the raffling dice falſe Damon threw;
The raffling dice to him decide the prize.
'Twas there he firſt convers'd with Chloe's eyes;
Hence ſprung th' ill-fated cauſe of all my ſmart,
To me the toy he gave, to her his heart.
But ſoon thy perj'ry in the gift was found,
The ſhiver'd China dropt upon the ground;
Sure omen that thy vows would faithleſs prove;
Frail was thy preſent, frailer is thy love.
O happy Pall, in wiry priſon pent;
Thou ne'er haſt known what love or rivals meant,
And Pug with pleaſure can his fetters bear,
Who ne'er believ'd the vows that lovers ſwear!
How am I curſt! (unhappy and forlorn)
With perjury, with love, and rival's ſcorn!
Falſe are the looſe coquet's inveigling airs,
Falſe is the pompous grief of youthful heirs,
Falſe is the cringing courtier's plighted word,
Falſe are the dice when gameſters ſtamp the board,
Falſe is the ſprightly widow's public tear;
Yet theſe to Damon's oaths are all ſincere.
Fly from perfidious man, the ſex diſdain;
Let ſervile Chloe wear the nuptial chain.
Damon is practis'd in the modiſh life,
Can hate, and yet be civil to a wife.
He games, he ſwears; he drinks; he fights; he roves;
Yet Chloe can believe he fondly loves.
Miſtreſs and wife can well ſupply his need,
A miſs for pleaſure, and a wife for breed.

But Chloe's air is unconfin'd and gay,
And can perhaps an injur'd bed repay;
Perhaps her patient temper can behold
The rival of her love adorn'd with gold,
Powder'd with di'monds; free from thought and care,
A husband's ſullen humours ſhe can bear.
Why are theſe ſobs? and why theſe ſtreaming eyes?
Is love the cauſe? no, I the ſex deſpiſe;
I hate, I loath his baſe perfidious name.
Yet if he ſhould but feign a rival flame?
But Chloe boaſts and triumphs in my pains,
To her he's faithful, 'tis to me he feigns.
Thus love-ſick Lydia rav'd. her maid appears;
A band-box in her ſteady hand ſhe bears.
How well this ribband's gloſs becomes your face,
She cries, in raptures! then, ſo ſweet a lace!
How charmingly you look! ſo bright! ſo fair!
'Tis to your eyes the head-dreſs owes its air.
Straight Lydia ſmil'd; the comb adjuſts her locks,
And at the play-houſe Harry keeps her box.

THE TEA-TABLE,

A TOWN ECLOGUE.

DORIS AND MELANTHE.

SAINT James's noon-day bell for pray'rs had toll'd,
And coaches to the patron's levée roll'd,
When Doris rose. And now through all the room
From flow'ry tea exhales a fragrant fume.
Cup after cup they sipt, and talk'd by fits,
For Doris here, and there Melanthe sits.
Doris was young, a laughter-loving dame,
Nice of her own alike and others fame;
Melanthe's tongue could well a tale advance,
And sooner gave than sunk a circumstance:
Lock'd in her mem'ry secrets never dy'd;
Doris begun, Melanthe thus reply'd.

DORIS.

Sylvia the vain fantastic fop admires,
The rake's loose gallantry her bosom fires;

Sylvia like that is vain, like this ſhe roves,
In liking them ſhe but her ſelf approves.

MELANTHE.

Laura rails on at men, the ſex reviles,
Their vice condemns, or at their folly ſmiles.
Why ſhould her tongue in juſt reſentment ſail,
Since men at her with equal freedom rail?

DORIS.

Laſt maſquerade was Sylvia nymph-like ſeen,
Her hand a crook ſuſtain'd, her dreſs was green;
An am'rous ſhepherd led her through the croud,
The nymph was innocent, the ſhepherd vow'd;
But nymphs their innocence with ſhepherds truſt;
So both withdrew, as nymph and ſhepherd muſt.

MELANTHE.

Name but the licence of the modern ſtage,
Laura takes fire, and kindles into rage;
The whining tragic love ſhe ſcarce can bear,
But nauſeous comedy ne'er ſhock'd her ear;
Yet in the gall'ry mobb'd, ſhe ſits ſecure,
And laughs at jeſts that turn the box demure.

DORIS.

Truſt not, ye ladies, to your beauty's pow'r,
For beauty withers like a ſhrivell'd flow'r;
Yet thoſe fair flow'rs that Sylvia's temples bind,
Fade not with ſudden blights or winter's wind;
Like thoſe her face defies the rolling years,
For art her roſes and her charms repairs.

MELANTHE.

Laura deſpiſes ev'ry outward grace,
The wanton ſparkling eye, the blooming face;
The beauties of the ſoul are all her pride,
For other beauties nature has deny'd;

If affectation ſhow a beauteous mind,
Lives there a man to Laura's merits blind?

DORIS.

Sylvia be ſure defies the town's reproach,
Whoſe deſhabille is ſoil'd in hackney coach;
What though the ſaſh was clos'd, muſt we conclude,
That ſhe was yielding, when her ſop was rude?

MELANTHE.

Laura learnt caution at too dear a coſt.
What fair could e'er retrieve her honour loſt?
Secret ſhe loves; and who the nymph can blame,
Who durſt not own a footman's vulgar flame?

DORIS.

Though Laura's homely taſte deſcend ſo low;
Her footman well may vye with Sylvia's beau.

MELANTHE.

Yet why ſhould Laura think it a diſgrace,
When proud Miranda's groom wears Flander's lace?

DORIS.

What, though for muſic Cynthio boaſts an ear?
Robin perhaps can hum an opera air.
Cynthio can bow, takes ſnuff, and dances well,
Robin talks common ſenſe, can write and ſpell;
Sylvia's vain fancy dreſs and ſhow admires,
But 'tis the man alone who Laura fires.

MELANTHE.

Plato's wiſe morals Laura's ſoul improve:
And this no doubt muſt be Platonic love!
Her ſoul to gen'rous acts was ſtill inclin'd;
What ſhows more virtue than an humble mind?

DORIS.

What though young Sylvia love the Park's cool ſhade,
And wander in the dusk the ſecret glade?

Maſqu'd and alone (by chance) ſhe met her ſpark,
That innocence is weak which ſhuns the dark.

MELANTHE.

But Laura for her flame has no pretence;
Her footman is a footman too in ſenſe.
All prudes I hate, and thoſe are rightly curſt
With ſcandal's double load, who cenſure firſt.

DORIS.

And what if Cynthio Sylvia's garter ty'd!
Who ſuch a foot and ſuch a leg would hide;
When crook-kneed Phillis can expoſe to view
Her gold-clock'd ſtocking, and her tawdry ſhoe?

MELANTHE.

If pure devotion center in the face,
If cens'ring others ſhow intrinſic grace,
If guilt to public freedoms be confin'd,
Prudes (all muſt own) are of the holy kind!

DORIS.

Sylvia diſdains reſerve, and flies conſtraint:
She neither is, nor would be thought a ſaint.

MELANTHE.

Love is a trivial paſſion, Laura cries,
May I be bleſt with friendſhip's ſtricter ties;
To ſuch a breaſt all ſecrets we commend;
Sure the whole Drawing-room is Laura's friend.

DORIS.

At marriage Sylvia rails; who men would truſt?
Yet husbands jealouſies are ſometimes juſt.
Her favours Sylvia ſhares among mankind,
Such gen'rous love ſhould never be confin'd.

As thus alternate chat employ'd their tongue,
With thund'ring raps the braſen knocker rung.

Laura with Sylvia came; the nymphs arise:
This unexpected visit, Doris cries,
Is doubly kind! Melanthe Laura led,
Since I was last so blest, my dear, she said,
Sure 'tis an age! they sate; the hour was set;
And all again that night at Ombre met.

THE

FUNERAL,

A TOWN ECLOGUE.

SABINA. LUCY.

TWICE had the moon perform'd her monthly race,
Since firſt the veil o'ercaſt Sabina's face.
Then dy'd the tender partner of her bed.
And lives Sabina when Fidelio's dead?
Fidelio's dead, and yet Sabina lives.
But ſee the tribute of her tears ſhe gives;
Their abſent lord her rooms in ſable mourn,
And all the day the glimmering tapers burn;
Stretch'd on the couch of ſtate ſhe penſive lies,
While oft the ſnowy cambrick wipes her eyes.
Now enter'd Lucy, truſty Lucy knew,
To roll a ſleeve, or bear a Billet-doux;
Her ready tongue, in ſecret ſervice try'd,
With equal fluency ſpoke truth or ly'd,
She well could fluſh, or humble a gallant,
And ſerve at once as maid and confidant;
A letter from her faithful ſtays ſhe took:
Sabina ſnatch'd it with an angry look,
And thus in haſty words her grief confeſt,
While Lucy ſtrove to ſooth her troubled breaſt.

SABINA.

What, ſtill Myrtillo's hand! his flame I ſcorn,
Give back his paſſion with the ſeal untorn.
To break our ſoft repoſe has man a right,
And are we doom'd to read whate'er they write?
Not all the ſex my firm reſolves ſhall move,
My life's a life of ſorrow, not of love.
May Lydia's wrinkles all my forehead trace,
And Celia's paleneſs ſicken o'er my face,
May fops of mine, as Flavia's favours, boaſt,
And coquets triumph in my honour loſt;
May cards employ my nights, and never more
May theſe curſt eyes behold a matadore!
Break China, periſh Shock, die Perroquet!
When I Fidelio's dearer love forget.
Fidelio's judgment ſcorn'd the ſoppiſh train,
His air was eaſy, and his dreſs was plain,
His words ſincere, reſpect his preſence drew,
And on his lips ſweet converſation grew.
Where's wit, where's beauty, where is virtue fled?
Alas! they're now no more; Fidelio's dead!

LUCY.

Yet when he liv'd, he wanted ev'ry grace;
That eaſy air was then an aukward pace:
Have not your ſighs in whiſpers often ſaid,
His dreſs was ſlovenly, his ſpeech ill-bred?
Have not I heard you, with a ſecret tear,
Call that ſweet converſe ſullen and ſevere?
Think not I come to take Myrtillo's part,
Let Chloe, Daphne, Doris ſhare his heart.
Let Chloe's love in ev'ry ear expreſs
His graceful perſon and genteel addreſs.
All well may judge, what ſhaft has Daphne hit,
Who ſuffers ſilence to admire his wit.

His equipage and liv'ries Doris move,
But Chloe, Daphne, Doris fondly love.
Sooner ſhall cits in faſhions guide the court,
And beaus upon the buſy Change reſort;
Sooner the nation ſhall from ſnuff be freed,
And ſops apartments ſmoke with India's weed,
Sooner I'd wiſh and ſigh through nun'ry grates,
Than recommend the flame Sabina hates.

SABINA.

Becauſe ſome widows are in haſte ſubdu'd;
Shall ev'ry ſop upon our tears intrude?
Can I forget my lov'd Fidelio's tongue,
Soft as the warbling of Italian ſong?
Did not his roſy lips breathe forth perfume,
Fragrant as ſteams from tea's imperial bloom?

LUCY.

Yet once you thought that tongue a greater curſe
Than ſquawles of children for an abſent nurſe.
Have you not fancy'd in his frequent kiſs
Th' ungrateful leavings of a filthy miſs?

SABINA.

Love, I thy pow'r defy; no ſecond flame,
Shall ever raze my dear Fidelio's name.
Fannia without a tear might loſe her lord,
Who ne'er enjoy'd his preſence but at board.
And why ſhould ſorrow ſit on Lesbia's face?
Are there ſuch comforts in a ſot's embrace?
No friend, no lover is to Lesbia dead,
For Lesbia long had known a ſep'rate bed.
Guſh forth, ye tears; waſte, waſte, ye ſighs, my breaſt;
My days, my nights were by Fidelio bleſt!

LUCY.

You cannot ſure forget how oft' you ſaid
His teazing fondneſs jealouſy betray'd!

When at the play the neighb'ring box he took,
You thought you read ſuſpicion in his look;
When cards and counters flew around the board,
Have you not wiſh'd the abſence of your lord?
His company was then a poor pretence,
To check the freedoms of a wife's expence!

SABINA.

But why ſhould I Myrtillo's paſſion blame,
Since love's a fierce involuntary flame?

LUCY.

Could he the ſallies of his heart withſtand,
Why ſhould he not to Chloe give his hand?
For Chloe's handſom, yet he ſlights her flame;
Laſt night ſhe fainted at Sabina's name.
Why, Daphne, doſt thou blaſt Sabina's charms?
Sabina keeps no lover from thy arms.
At Crimp Myrtillo play'd, in kind regards
Doris dealt love; he only dealt the cards;
Doris was touch'd with ſpleen; her fan ſhe rent,
Flew from the table, and to tears gave vent.
Why, Doris, doſt thou curſe Sabina's eyes?
To her Myrtillo is a vulgar prize.

SABINA.

Yet ſay, I lov'd; how loud would cenſure rail,
So ſoon to quit the duties of the veil!
No, ſooner plays and op'ras I'll forſwear,
And change theſe China jars for Tunbridge ware;
Or truſt my mother as a confidant,
Or fix a friendſhip with my maiden aunt,
Than till——to-morrow throw my weeds away.
Yet let me ſee him, if he comes to-day!

THE

ESPOUSAL,

A SOBER ECLOGUE,

Between two of the People called QUAKERS.

CALEB. TABITHA.

BEneath the ſhadow of a beaver hat,
Meek Caleb at a ſilent meeting ſat;
His eye-balls oft' forgot the holy trance,
While Tabitha demure, return'd the glance.
The meeting ended, Caleb ſilence broke,
And Tabitha her inward yearnings ſpoke.

CALEB.

Beloved, ſee how all things follow love,
Lamb fondleth lamb, and dove diſports with dove;
Yet fondled lambs their innocence ſecure,
And none can call the turtle's bill impure;
O faireſt of our ſiſters, let me be
The billing dove, and fondling lamb to thee.

TABITHA.

But, Caleb, know that birds of gentle mind
Elect a mate among the ſober kind,

Not the mockaws, all deck'd in ſcarlet pride,
Entice their mild and modeſt hearts aſide;
But thou, vain man, beguil'd by Popiſh ſhows,
Doateſt on ribbands, flounces, furbelows.
If thy falſe heart be fond of tawdry dyes,
Go, wed the painted arch in ſummer skies;
Such love will like the rainbow's hue decay,
Strong at the firſt, but paſſeth ſoon away.

CALEB.

Name not the frailties of my youthful days,
When vice miſ-led me through the harlot's ways;
When I with wanton look thy ſex beheld,
And nature with each wanton look rebell'd;
Then parti-colour'd pride my heart might move
With lace; the net to catch unhallow'd love.
All ſuch-like love is fading as the flower,
Springs in a day, and withereth in an hour:
But now I feel the ſponſal love within,
And ſpouſal love no ſiſter holds a ſin.

TABITHA.

I know thou longeſt for the flaunting maid,
Thy falſhood own, and ſay I am betray'd;
The tongue of man is bliſter'd o'er with lies,
But truth is ever read in woman's eyes;
O that my lip obey'd a tongue like thine!
Or that thine eye bewray'd a love like mine!

CALEB.

How bitter are thy words! forbear to teaze,
I too might blame——but love delights to pleaſe.
Why ſhould I tell thee, that when laſt the ſun
Painted the downy peach of Newington,
Joſiah led thee through the garden's walk,
And mingled melting kiſſes with his talk?

Ah jealouſy! turn, turn thine eyes aſide,
How can I ſee that watch adorn thy ſide?
For verily no gift the ſiſters take
For luſt of gain, but for the giver's ſake.

TABITHA.

I own, Joſiah gave the golden toy,
Which did the righteous hand of Quare employ;
When Caleb hath aſſign'd ſome happy day,
I look on this and chide the hours delay:
And when Joſiah would his love purſue,
On this I look and ſhun his wanton view.
Man but in vain with trinkets tries to move,
The only preſent love demands is love.

CALEB.

Ah Tabitha, to hear theſe words of thine
My pulſe beats high, as if inflam'd with wine!
When to the brethren firſt with fervent zeal
Thy ſpirit mov'd thy yearnings to reveal,
How did I joy thy trembling lip to ſee
Red as the cherry from the Kentiſh tree;
When extaſy had warm'd thy look ſo meek,
Gardens of roſes bluſhed on thy cheek.
With what ſweet tranſport didſt thou roll thine eyes,
How did thy words provoke the brethren's ſighs!
Words that with holy ſighs might others move,
But, Tabitha, my ſighs were ſighs of love.

TABITHA.

Is Tabitha beyond her wiſhes bleſt?
Does no proud worldly dame divide thy breaſt?
Then hear me, Caleb, witneſs what I ſpeak,
This ſolemn promiſe death alone can break;
Sooner I would bedeck my brow with lace,
And with immodeſt fav'rites ſhade my face,

Sooner like Babylon's lewd whore be dreſt
In flaring di'monds and a ſcarlet veſt,
Or make a curt'ſy in cathedral pew,
Than prove inconſtant, while my Caleb's true.

CALEB.

When I prove falſe, and Tabitha forſake,
Teachers ſhall dance a jig at country wake;
Brethren unbeaver'd then ſhall bow their head,
And with prophane mince-pies our babes be fed.

TABITHA.

If that Joſiah were with paſſion fir'd,
Warm as the zeal of youth when firſt inſpir'd;
In ſteady love though he might perſevere,
Unchanging as the decent garb we wear,
And thou wert fickle as the wind that blows,
Light as the feather on the head of beaus;
Yet I for thee would all the ſex reſign,
Siſters, take all the reſt——be Caleb mine.

CALEB.

Though I had all that ſinful love affords,
And all the concubines of all the lords,
Whoſe couches creak with whoredom's ſinful ſhame,
Whoſe velvet chairs are with adult'ry lame;
Ev'n in the harlot's hall, I would not ſip
The dew of lewdneſs from her lying lip;
I'd ſhun her paths, upon thy mouth to dwell,
More ſweet than powder which the merchants ſell;
O ſolace me with kiſſes pure like thine!
Enjoy, ye lords, the wanton concubine,
The ſpring now calls us forth; come, ſiſter, come,
To ſee the primroſe and the daiſy bloom,
Let ceremony bind the worldly pair,
Siſters eſteem the brethrens word ſincere.

TABITHA.

Espousals are but forms. O lead me hence,
For secret love can never give offence.

Then hand in hand the loving mates withdraw.
' True love is nature unrestrain'd by law.
This tenet all the holy sect allows;
So Tabitha took earnest of a spouse.

MISCELLANIES.

TO MY INGENIOUS AND WORTHY FRIEND,

W——— L——— ESQ;

Author of that celebrated treatiſe in folio, called the LAND-TAX BILL.

WHEN poets print their works, the ſcribbling crew
Stick the bard o'er with bays, like Chriſtmas pew:
Can meagre poetry ſuch fame deſerve?
Can poetry; that only writes to ſtarve?
And ſhall no laurel deck that famous head,
In which the ſenate's annual law is bred?
That hoary head, which greater glory fires,
By nobler WAYS and MEANS true fame acquires.
O had I Virgil's force to ſing the man,
Whoſe learned lines can millions raiſe PER ANN.
Great L——— his praiſe ſhould ſwell the trump of fame,
And Rapes and Wapentakes reſound his name.
If the blind poet gain'd a long renown
By ſinging ev'ry Grecian chief and town;
Sure L——— his proſe much greater fame requires,
Which ſweetly counts five thouſand knights and ſquires,
Their ſeats, their cities, pariſhes and ſhires.

Thy copious preamble ſo ſmoothly runs,
Taxes no more appear like legal duns,
Lords, knights, and ſquires th' aſſeſſors power obey,
We read with pleaſure, though with pain we pay.
Ah why did C—— thy works defame!
That author's long harangue betrays his name:
After his ſpeeches can his pen ſucceed?
Though forc'd to hear, we're not oblig'd to read.
Under what ſcience ſhall thy works be read?
All know thou wert not poet born and bred;
Or doſt thou boaſt th' hiſtorian's laſting pen,
Whoſe annals are the Acts of worthy men?
No. ſatyr is thy talent; and each laſh
Makes the rich miſer tremble o'er his caſh;
What on the drunkard can be more ſevere,
Than direful taxes on his ale and beer?
Ev'n Button's wits are nought compar'd to thee,
Who ne'er were known or prais'd but o'er his tea,
While thou through Britain's diſtant iſle ſhalt ſpread,
In ev'ry Hundred and Diviſion read.
Critics in Claſſics oft' interpolate,
But ev'ry word of thine is fixt as fate.
Some works come forth at noon, but die at night
In blazing fringes round a tallow light,
Some may perhaps to a whole week extend,
Like S—— (when unaſſiſted by a friend)
But thou ſhalt live a year in ſpite of fate;
And where's your author boaſts a longer date?
Poets of old had ſuch a wondrous power,
That with their verſes they could raiſe a tower;
But in thy proſe a greater force is found;
What poet ever rais'd ten thouſand pound?
Cadmus, by ſowing dragons teeth, we read,
Rais'd a vaſt army from the pois'nous ſeed.

Thy labours, L——, can greater wonders do,
Thou raiſeſt armies, and canſt pay them too.
Truce with thy dreaded pen; thy annals ceaſe;
Why need we armies when the land's in peace?
Soldiers are perfect devils in their way,
When once they're rais'd, they're curſed hard to lay.

PANTHEA.

An ELEGY.

LOng had Panthea felt love's ſecret ſmart,
And hope and fear alternate rul'd her heart;
Conſenting glances had her flame confeſt.
(In woman's eyes her very ſoul's expreſt)
Perjur'd Alexis ſaw the bluſhing maid,
He ſaw, he ſwore, he conquer'd and betray'd:
Another love now calls him from her arms,
His fickle heart another beauty warms;
Thoſe oaths oft' whiſper'd in Panthea's ears,
He now again to Galatea ſwears.
Beneath a beach th' abandon'd virgin laid,
In grateful ſolitude enjoys the ſhade;
There with faint voice ſhe breath'd theſe moving ſtrains,
While ſighing zephyrs ſhar'd her am'rous pains.
Pale ſettled ſorrow hangs upon my brow,
Dead are my charms; Alexis breaks his vow!
Think, think, dear ſhepherd, on the days you knew,
When I was happy when my ſwain was true;
Think how thy looks and tongue are form'd to move,
And think yet more——that all my fault was love.
Ah, could you view me in this wretched ſtate!
You might not love me, but you could not hate.

Could you behold me in this conſcious ſhade,
Where firſt thy vows, where firſt my love was paid,
Worn out with watching, ſullen with deſpair,
And ſee each eye ſwell with a guſhing tear?
Could you behold me on this moſſy bed,
From my pale cheek the lively crimſon fled,
Which in my ſofter hours you oft' have ſworn,
With roſy beauty far out-bluſh'd the morn;
Could you untouch'd this wretched object bear,
And would not loſt Panthea claim a tear?
You could not ſure—tears from your eyes would ſteal,
And unawares thy tender ſoul reveal.
Ah no!—thy ſoul with cruelty is fraught,
No tenderneſs diſturbs thy ſavage thought;
Sooner ſhall tigers ſpare the trembling lambs,
And wolves with pity hear their bleating dams;
Sooner ſhall vultures from their quarry fly,
Than falſe Alexis for Panthea ſigh.
Thy boſom ne'er a tender thought confeſt,
Sure ſtubborn flint has arm'd thy cruel breaſt;
But hardeſt flints are worn by frequent rains,
And the ſoft drops diſſolve their ſolid veins;
While thy relentleſs heart more hard appears,
And is not ſoften'd by a flood of tears.

Ah, what is love! Panthea's joys are gone,
Her liberty, her peace, her reaſon flown!
And when I view me in the watry glaſs,
I find Panthea now, not what ſhe was.
As northern winds the new-blown roſes blaſt,
And on the ground their fading ruins caſt;
As ſudden blights corrupt the ripen'd grain,
And of its verdure ſpoil the mournful plain;
So hapleſs love on blooming features preys,
So hapleſs love deſtroys our peaceful days.

Come, gentle ſleep, relieve theſe weary'd eyes,
All ſorrow in thy ſoft embraces dies:
There, ſpite of all thy perjur'd vows, I find
Faithleſs Alexis languiſhingly kind;
Sometimes he leads me by the mazy ſtream,
And pleaſingly deludes me in my dream;
Sometimes he guides me to the ſecret grove,
Where all our looks, and all our talk is love.
Oh, could I thus conſume each tedious day,
And in ſweet ſlumbers dream my life away;
But ſleep, which now no more relieves theſe eyes,
To my ſad ſoul the dear deceit denies.

Why does the ſun dart forth his chearful rays?
Why do the woods reſound with warbling lays?
Why does the roſe her grateful fragrance yield,
And yellow cowſlips paint the ſmiling field?
Why do the ſtreams with murm'ring muſic flow,
And why do groves their friendly ſhade beſtow.
Let ſable clouds the chearful ſun deface,
Let mournful ſilence ſeize the feather'd race;
No more, ye roſes, grateful fragrance yield,
Droop, droop, ye cowſlips, in the blaſted field;
No more, ye ſtreams, with murm'ring muſic flow,
And let not groves a friendly ſhade beſtow:
With ſympathizing grief let nature mourn,
And never know the youthful ſpring's return;
And ſhall I never more Alexis ſee?
Then what is ſpring, or grove, or ſtream to me?

Why ſport the ſkipping lambs on yonder plain?
Why do the birds their tuneful voices ſtrain?
Why friſk thoſe heifers in the cooling grove?
Their happier life is ignorant of love.

Oh! lead me to ſome melancholy cave,
To lull my ſorrows in a living grave,

From the dark rock where dashing waters fall,
And creeping ivy hangs the craggy wall,
Where I may waste in tears my hours away,
And never know the seasons or the day.
Die, die, Panthea——fly this hateful grove,
For what is life without the swain I love?

ARAMINTA.

AN ELEGY.

NOW Phoebus rose; and with his early beams
Wak'd slumb'ring Delia from her pleasing dreams;
Her wishes by her fancy were supply'd,
And in her sleep the nuptial knot was ty'd.
With secret joy she saw the morning ray
Chequer the floor, and through the curtains play;
The happy morn that shall her bless compleat,
And all her rivals envious hopes defeat.
In haste she rose; forgetful of her pray'rs,
Flew to the glass, and practis'd o'er her airs:
Her new-set jewels round her robe are plac'd,
Some in a brilliant buckle bind her waist;
Some round her neck a circling light display,
Some in her hair diffuse a trembling ray;
The silver knot o'erlooks the Mechlen lace,
And adds becoming beauties to her face:
Brocaded flow'rs o'er the gay manteau shine,
And the rich stays her taper shape confine:
Thus all her dress exerts a graceful pride,
And sporting loves surround th' expecting bride,
For Daphnis now attends the blushing maid,
Before the priest their solemn vows are paid;

This day which ends at once all Delia's cares,
Shall ſwell a thouſand eyes with ſecret tears.
Ceaſe, Araminta, 'tis in vain to grieve,
Canſt thou from Hymen's bonds the youth retrieve?
Diſdain his perj'ries, and no longer mourn:
Recall my love, and find a ſure return.

But ſtill the wretched maid no comfort knows,
And with reſentment cheriſhes her woes;
Alone ſhe pines, and in theſe mournful ſtrains,
Of Daphnis' vows, and her own fate complains.

Was it for this I ſparkled at the Play,
And loiter'd in the Ring whole hours away?
When if thy chariot in the circle ſhone,
Our mutual paſſion by our looks was known:
Through the gay croud my watchful glances flew,
Where-e'er I paſs thy grateful eyes purſue.

'Ah faithleſs youth! too well you ſaw my pain;
'For eyes the language of the ſoul explain.

Think, Daphnis, think that ſcarce five days are fled,
Since (O falſe tongue!) thoſe treach'rous things you ſaid;
How did you praiſe my ſhape and graceful air!
And woman thinks all compliments ſincere.
Didſt thou not then in rapture ſpeak thy flame,
And in ſoft ſighs breathe Araminta's name?
Didſt thou not then with oaths thy paſſion prove,
And with an awful trembling, ſay——I love?

'Ah faithleſs youth! too well you ſaw my pain:
'For eyes the language of the ſoul explain.

How could'ſt thou thus, ungrateful youth, deceive?
How could I thus, unguarded maid, believe?
Sure thou canſt well recall that fatal night,
When ſubtle love firſt enter'd at my ſight:

When in the dance I was thy partner chose,
Gods! what a rapture in my bosom rose!
My trembling hand my sudden joy confess'd,
My glowing cheeks a wounded heart express'd;
My looks spoke love; while you with answ'ring eyes,
In killing glances made as kind replies.
Think, Daphnis, think, what tender things you said,
Think what confusion all my soul betray'd;
You call'd my graceful presence Cynthia's air,
And when I sung, the Syrens charm'd your ear;
My flame blown up by flatt'ry stronger grew,
A gale of love in ev'ry whisper flew.
'Ah faithless youth! too well you saw my pain;
'For eyes the language of the soul explain.

Whene'er I dress'd, my maid, who knew my flame,
Cherish'd my passion with thy lovely name;
Thy picture in her talk so lively grew,
That thy dear image rose before my view;
She dwelt whole hours upon thy shape and mien,
And wounded Delia's fame to sooth my spleen:
When she beheld me at the name grow pale,
Straight to thy charms she chang'd her artful tale;
And when thy matchless charms were quite run o'er,
I bid her tell the pleasing tale once more.
Oh, Daphnis! from thy Araminta fled!
Oh, to my love for ever, ever dead!
Like death, his nuptials all my hope remove,
And ever part me from the man I love.
'Ah faithless youth! too well you saw my pain;
'For eyes the language of the soul explain.

O might I by my cruel fate be thrown,
In some retreat far from this hateful town!

Vain dreſs and glaring equipage, adieu!
Let happier nymphs thoſe empty ſhows purſue,
Me, let ſome melancholy ſhade ſurround,
Where not the print of human ſtep is found.
In the gay dance my feet no more ſhall move,
But bear me faintly through the lonely grove;
No more theſe hands ſhall o'er the ſpinnet bound,
And from the ſleeping ſtrings call forth the ſound;
Muſic adieu, farewel Italian airs!
The croaking raven now ſhall ſooth my cares.
On ſome old ruine loſt in thought I reſt,
And think how Araminta once was bleſt;
There o'er and o'er thy letters I peruſe,
And all my grief in one kind ſentence loſe,
Some tender line by chance my woe beguiles,
And on my cheek a ſhort-liv'd pleaſure ſmiles;
Why is this dawn of joy? flow tears again;
Vain are theſe oaths, and all theſe vows are vain;
Daphnis, alas! the Gordian knot has ty'd,
No force nor cunning can the band divide.
'Ah faithleſs youth! ſince eyes the ſoul explain,
'Why knew I not that artful tongue could feign?

AN
ELEGY ON A LAP-DOG.

SHOCK's fate I mourn; poor Shock is now no more,
Ye muſes mourn, ye chamber-maids deplore.
Unhappy Shock, yet more unhappy fair,
Doom'd to ſurvive thy joy and only care!
Thy wretched fingers now no more ſhall deck,
And tye the fav'rite ribband round his neck;
No more thy hand ſhall ſmooth his gloſſy hair,
And comb the wavings of his pendent ear.
Yet ceaſe thy flowing grief, forſaken maid;
All mortal pleaſures in a moment fade:
Our ſureſt hope is in an hour deſtroy'd,
And love, beſt gift of heav'n, not long enjoy'd.
Methinks I ſee her frantic with deſpair,
Her ſtreaming eyes, wrung hands, and flowing hair;
Her Mechlen pinners rent the floor beſtrow,
And her torn fan gives real ſigns of woe.
Hence ſuperſtition, that tormenting gueſt,
That haunts with fanſy'd fears the coward breaſt;
No dread events upon this fate attend,
Stream eyes no more, no more thy treſſes rend.
Though certain omens oft' forewarn a ſtate,
And dying lions ſhow the monarch's fate;
Why ſhould ſuch fears bid Celia's ſorrow riſe?
For when a lap-dog falls no lover dies.
Ceaſe, Celia, ceaſe; reſtrain thy flowing tears,
Some warmer paſſion will diſpel thy cares.

In man you'll find a more ſubſtantial bliſs,
More grateful toying, and a ſweeter kiſs.
He's dead, oh lay him gently in the ground!
And may his tomb be by this verſe renown'd.
'Here Shock, the pride all his kind is laid;
'Who fawn'd like man, but ne'er like man betray'd.

TO A
YOUNG LADY,
With ſome LAMPREYS.

WITH lovers 'twas of old the faſhion
By preſents to convey their paſſion:
No matter what the gift they ſent,
The lady ſaw that love was meant.
Fair Atalanta, as a favour,
Took the boar's head her hero gave her;
Nor could the briſtly thing affront her,
'Twas a fit preſent from a hunter.
When ſquires ſend woodcocks to the dame,
It ſerves to ſhow their abſent flame:
Some by a ſnip of woven hair,
In poſied lockets bribe the fair;
How many mercenary matches,
Have ſprung from di'mond-rings and watches!
But hold——a ring, a watch, a locket,
Would drain at once a poet's pocket;
He ſhould ſend ſongs that coſt him nought,
Nor ev'n be prodigal of thought.
Why then ſend lampreys? fy, for ſhame!
'Twill ſet a virgin's blood on flame.
This to fifteen a proper gift!
It might lend ſixty-five a lift.
I know your maiden aunt will ſcold,
And think my preſent ſomewhat bold.
I ſee her lift her hands and eyes.
'What eat it, niece; eat Spaniſh flies!

'Lamprey's a moſt immodeſt diet:
'You'll neither wake nor ſleep in quiet.
'Should I to-night eat ſago cream,
''Twould make me bluſh to tell my dream;
'If I eat lobſter, 'tis ſo warming,
'That ev'ry man I ſee looks charming;
'Wherefore had not the filthy fellow
'Laid Rocheſter upon your pillow?
'I vow and ſwear, I think the preſent
'Had been as modeſt and as decent.
'Who has her virtue in her power?
'Each day has its unguarded hour;
'Always in danger of undoing,
'A prawn, a ſhrimp may prove our ruin!
'The ſhepherdeſs, who lives on ſallad,
'To cool her youth, controuls her palate;
'Should Dian's maids turn liqu'riſh livers,
'And of huge lampreys rob the rivers,
'Then all beſide each glade and viſto
'You'd ſee nymphs lying like Caliſto.
'The man who meant to heat your blood,
'Needs not himſelf ſuch vicious food——
In this, I own, your aunt is clear,
I ſent you what I well might ſpare:
For when I ſee you, (without joking)
Your eyes, lips, breaſts are ſo provoking,
They ſet my heart more cock-a-hoop,
Than could whole ſeas of cray-fiſh ſoupe.

PROLOGUE,

DESIGNED FOR THE

PASTORAL TRAGEDY OF DIONE.

THERE was a time (oh were thoſe days renew'd!)
Ere tyrant laws had woman's will ſubdu'd;
Then nature rul'd, and love devoid of art,
Spoke the conſenting language of the heart.
Love uncontroul'd! inſipid poor delight!
'Tis the reſtraint that whets our appetite.
Behold the beaſts who range the foreſts free,
Behold the birds who fly from tree to tree;
In their amours ſee nature's power appear!
And do they love? yes—one month in the year.
Were theſe the pleaſures of the golden reign?
And did free nature thus inſtruct the ſwain?
I envy not, ye nymphs, your am'rous bowers:
Such harmleſs ſwains! I'm ev'n content with ours.
But yet there's ſomething in theſe ſylvan ſcenes
That tells our fancy what the lover means;
Name but the moſſy bank, and moon-light grove,
Is there a heart that does not beat with love?
To-night we treat you with ſuch country fare,
Then for your lovers ſake our author ſpare.
He draws no Hemskirk boors, or home-bred clowns,
But the ſoft ſhepherds of Arcadia's downs.
When Paris on the three his judgment paſs'd;
I hope, you'll own the ſhepherd ſhow'd his taſte:

And Jove, all know, was a good judge of beauty,
Who made the nymph Caliſto break her duty;
Then was the country nymph no aukward thing.
See what ſtrange revolutions time can bring!
Yet ſtill methinks our author's ſate I dread,
Were it not ſafer beaten paths to tread
Of tragedy; than o'er wide heaths to ſtray,
And ſeeking ſtrange adventures loſe his way?
No trumpet's clangor makes his heroine ſtart,
And tears the ſoldier from her bleeding heart;
He, fooliſh bard! nor pomp or ſhow regards.
Without the witneſs of a hundred guards
His lovers ſigh their vows.——if ſleep ſhould take ye,
He has no battle, no loud drum to wake ye.
What, no ſuch ſhifts? there's danger in't, 'tis true;
Yet ſpare him, as he gives you ſomething new.

SWEET WILLIAM's FAREWELL TO BLACK-EY'D SUSAN.

A BALLAD.

I.

ALL in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,
The ſtreamers waving in the wind,
When black-ey'd Suſan came on board,
Oh! where ſhall I my true love find!
Tell me, ye jovial ſailors, tell me true,
If my ſweet William ſails among the crew.

II.

William, who high upon the yard,
Rock'd with the billows to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He ſigh'd and caſt his eyes below:
The cord ſlides ſwiftly through his glowing hands,
And (quick as lightning) on the deck he ſtands.

III.

So the ſweet lark, high-pois'd in air,
Shuts cloſe his pinions to his breaſt,
(If, chance, his mate's ſhrill call he hear)
And drops at once into her neſt.
The nobleſt captain in the Britiſh fleet,
Might envy William's lip thoſe kiſſes ſweet.

IV.

O Sufan, Sufan, lovely dear,
My vows ſhall ever true remain;
Let me kiſs off that falling tear,
We only part to meet again.
Change, as ye liſt, ye winds; my heart ſhall be
The faithful compaſs that ſtill points to thee.

V.

Believe not what the landmen ſay,
Who tempt with doubts thy conſtant mind:
They'll tell thee, ſailors, when away,
In ev'ry port a miſtreſs find.
Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee ſo,
For thou art preſent wereſoe'er I go.

VI.

If to far India's coaſt we ſail,
Thy eyes are ſeen in di'monds bright,
Thy breath is Africk's ſpicy gale,
Thy skin is ivory, ſo white.
Thus ev'ry beauteous object that I view,
Wakes in my ſoul ſome charms of lovely Sue.

VII.

Though battle call me from thy arms,
Let not my pretty Sufan mourn;
Though cannons roar, yet ſafe from harms,
William ſhall to his dear return.
Love turns aſide the balls that round me fly,
Leſt precious tears ſhould drop from Sufan's eye.

VIII.

The boatſwain gave the dreadful word,
The ſails their ſwelling boſom ſpread,
No longer muſt ſhe ſtay aboard:
They kiſs'd, ſhe ſigh'd, he hung his head;
Her leſs'ning boat, unwilling rows to land:
Adieu, ſhe cries! and wav'd her lily hand.

THE LADY's LAMENTATION.

A BALLAD.

I.

PHYLLIDA, that lov'd to dream
In the grove, or by the ſtream;
Sigh'd on velvet pillow.
What, alas! ſhould fill her head
But a fountain or a mead,
Water and a willow?

II.

Love in cities never dwells,
He delights in rural cells,
Which ſweet wood-bine covers.
What are your Aſſemblies then?
There, 'tis true, we ſee more men;
But muchfewer lovers.

III.

Oh, how chang'd the proſpect grows!
Flocks and herds to ſops and beaus,
Coxcombs without number!
Moon and ſtars that ſhone ſo bright,
To the torch and waxen light,
And whole nights at Ombre.

IV.

Pleaſant as it is, to hear
Scandal tickling in our ear,
  Ev'n of our own mothers;
In the chit-chat of the day,
To us is pay'd, when we're away,
  What we lent to others.

V.

Though the fav'rite Toaſt I reign;
Wine, they ſay, that prompts the vain,
  Heightens deſamation.
Muſt I live 'twixt ſpite and fear,
Ev'ry day grow handſomer,
  And loſe my reputation?

VI.

Thus the fair to ſighs gave way,
Her empty purſe beſide her lay.
  Nymph, ah ceaſe thy ſorrow.
Though curſt fortune frown to-night;
This odious town can give delight
  If you win to-morrow.

DAMON AND CUPID.

A SONG.

I.

THE ſun was now withdrawn,
The ſhepherds home were ſped;
The moon wide o'er the lawn
Her ſilver mantle ſpread;
When Damon ſtaid behind,
And ſanter'd in the grove.
Will ne'er a nymph be kind,
And give me love for love?

II.

Oh! thoſe were golden hours,
When love devoid of cares,
In all Arcadia's bow'rs
Lodg'd ſwains and nymphs by pairs!
But now from wood and plain
Flies ev'ry ſprightly laſs,
No joys for me remain,
In ſhades, or on the graſs.

III.

The winged boy draws near,
And thus the ſwain reproves,
While beauty revel'd here,
My game lay in the groves;

At court I never fail
  To ſcatter round my arrows,
Men fall as thick as hail;
  And maidens love like ſparrows.

IV.

Then, ſwain, if me you need,
  Sraight lay your ſheep-hook down;
Throw by your oaten reed,
  And haſte away to town.
So well I'm known at court,
  None ask where Cupid dwells;
But readily reſort
  To B———n's or L———ll's.

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE.

A SONG.

I.

DAPHNIS ſtood penſive in the ſhade,
With arms acroſs, and head reclin'd;
Pale looks accus'd the cruel maid,
And ſighs reliev'd his love-ſick mind:
His tuneful pipe all broken lay,
Looks, ſighs, and actions ſeemed to ſay,
My Chloe is unkind.

II.

Why ring the woods with warbling throats?
Ye larks, ye linnets, ceaſe your ſtrains;
I faintly hear in your ſweet notes,
My Chloe's voice that wakes my pains:
Yet why ſhould you your ſong forbear?
Your mates delight your ſong to hear,
But Chloe mine diſdains.

III.

As thus he melancholy ſtood,
Dejected as the lonely dove,
Sweet ſounds broke gently through the wood.
I feel the ſound: my heart-ſtrings move.

'Twas not the nightingale that ſung;
No. 'tis my Chloe's ſweeter tongue.
Hark, hark, what ſays my love!
How fooliſh is the nymph (ſhe cries)
Who trifles with her lover's pain!
Nature ſtill ſpeaks in woman's eyes,
Our artful lips were made to ſeign.
O Daphnis, Daphnis, 'twas my pride,
'Twas not my heart thy love deny'd.
Come back, dear youth, again.

V.

As t'other day my hand he ſeiz'd,
My blood with thrilling motion flew:
Sudden I put on looks diſpleas'd,
And haſty from his hold withdrew.
'Twas fear alone, thou ſimple ſwain.
Then hadſt thou preſt my hand again,
My heart had yielded too!

VI.

'Tis true thy tuneful reed I blam'd,
That ſwell'd thy lip and roſy cheek;
Think not thy skill in ſong defam'd,
That lip ſhould other pleaſures ſeek:
Much, much thy muſic I approve;
Yet break thy pipe, for more I love,
Much more to hear thee ſpeak.

VII.

My heart forebodes that I'm betray'd,
Daphnis I fear is ever gone;
Laſt night with Delia's dog he play'd,
Love by ſuch trifles firſt comes on.
Now, now, dear ſhepherd, come away,
My tongue would now my heart obey.
Ah, Chloe, thou art won!

VIII.

The youth ſtep'd forth with haſty pace,
And found where wiſhing Chloe lay;
Shame ſudden lighten'd in her face,
Confus'd, ſhe knew not what to ſay.
At laſt in broken words, ſhe cry'd;
To-morrow you in vain had try'd,
But I am loſt to-day!

A CONTEMPLATION ON NIGHT.

WHETHER amid the gloom of night I ſtray,
Or my glad eyes enjoy revolving day,
Still nature's various face informs my ſenſe,
Of an all-wiſe, all-pow'rful providence.
When the gay ſun firſt breaks the ſhades of night,
And ſtrikes the diſtant eaſtern hills with light,
Colour returns, the plains their liv'ry wear,
And a bright verdure clothes the ſmiling year;
The blooming flow'rs with opening beauties glow,
And grazing flocks their milky fleeces ſhow,
The barren cliffs with chalky fronts ariſe,
And a pure azure arches o'er the skies.
But when the gloomy reign of night returns,
Stript of her fading pride all nature mourns:
The trees no more their wonted verdure boaſt,
But weep in dewy tears their beauty loſt;
No diſtant landskips draw our curious eyes,
Wrapt in night's robe the whole creation lies.
Yet ſtill, ev'n now, while darkneſs clothes the land,
We view the traces of th' almighty hand;

Millions of ſtars in heav'n's wide vault appear,
And with new glories hang the boundleſs ſphere:
The ſilver moon her weſtern couch forſakes,
And o'er the skies her nightly circle makes,
Her ſolid globe beats back the ſunny rays,
And to the world her borrow'd light repays.
Whether thoſe ſtars that twinkling luſtre ſend,
Are ſuns, and rolling worlds thoſe ſuns attend,
Man may conjecture, and new ſchemes declare,
Yet all his ſyſtems but conjectures are;
But this we know, that heav'n's eternal King,
Who bid this univerſe from nothing ſpring,
Can at his WORD bid num'rous worlds appear,
And riſing worlds th' all-pow'rful WORD ſhall hear.
When to the weſtern main the ſun deſcends,
To other lands a riſing day he lends,
The ſpreading dawn another ſhepherd ſpies,
The wakeful flocks from their warm folds ariſe,
Refreſh'd, the peaſant ſeeks his early toil,
And bids the plow correct the fallow ſoil,
While we in ſleep's embraces waſte the night,
The climes oppos'd enjoy meridian light;
And when thoſe lands the buſy ſun forſakes,
With us again the roſy morning wakes;
In lazy ſleep the night rolls ſwift away,
And neither clime laments his abſent ray.
When the pure ſoul is from the body flown,
No more ſhall night's alternate reign be known:
The ſun no more ſhall rolling light beſtow,
But from th' Almighty ſtreams of glory flow.
Oh, may ſome nobler thought my ſoul employ
Than empty, tranſient, ſublunary joy!
The ſtars ſhall drop, the ſun ſhall loſe his flame,
But thou, O God, for ever ſhine the ſame.

A THOUGHT ON ETERNITY.

ERE the foundations of the world were laid,
Ere kindling light th' Almighty word obey'd,
Thou wert; and when the ſubterraneous flame
Shall burſt its priſon, and devour this frame,
From angry heav'n when the keen lightning flies,
When fervent heat diſſolves the melting skies,
Thou ſtill ſhalt be; ſtill, as thou wert before,
And know no change, when time ſhall be no more.
O endleſs thought! divine eternity!
Th' immortal ſoul ſhares but a part of thee;
For thou wert preſent when our life began,
When the warm duſt ſhot up in breathing man.
Ah! what is life? with ills incompaſs'd round,
Amidſt our hopes, fate ſtrikes the ſudden wound:
To-day the ſtateſman of new honour dreams,
To-morrow death deſtroys his airy ſchemes;
Is mouldy treaſure in thy cheſt confin'd;
Think all that treaſure thou muſt leave behind;

Thy heir with ſmiles ſhall view thy blazon'd herſe,
And all thy hoards with laviſh hand diſperſe.
Should certain fate th' impending blow delay,
Thy mirth will ſicken, and thy bloom decay;
Then feeble age will all thy nerves diſarm,
No more thy blood its narrow channels warm.
Who then would wiſh to ſtretch this narrow ſpan,
To ſuffer life beyond the date of man?
The virtuous ſoul purſues a nobler aim,
And life regards but as a fleeting dream:
She longs to wake, and wiſhes to get free,
To launch from earth into eternity.
For while the boundleſs theme extends our thought,
Ten thouſand thouſand rolling years are nought.

MY OWN
EPITAPH.

LIFE is a jeſt; and all things ſhow it,
I thought ſo once; but now I know it.

DIONE,

A

PASTORAL TRAGEDY.

——————SUNT NUMINA AMANTI,
SAEVIT ET INJUSTA LEGE RELICTA VENUS.

Tibull. Eleg. 5. Lib. 1.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

MEN.

EVANDER under the name of LYCIDAS.

CLEANTHES.

Shepherds.

WOMEN.

DIONE under the name of ALEXIS.

PARTHENIA.

LAURA.

SCENE, ARCADIA.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A plain, at the foot of a ſteep craggy mountain.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

WHY doſt thou fly me? ſtay, unhappy fair,
Seek not theſe horrid caverns of deſpair;
To trace thy ſteps the midnight air I bore,
Trod the brown deſart, and unſhelter'd moor:
Three times the lark has ſung his matin lay,
And roſe on dewy wing to meet the day,
Since firſt I found thee, ſtretch'd in penſive mood,
Where laurels border Ladon's ſilver flood.

DIONE.

O let my ſoul with grateful thanks o'erflow!
'Tis to thy hand my daily life I owe.
Like the weak lamb you rais'd me from the plain,
Too faint to bear bleak winds and beating rain;
Each day I ſhare thy bowl and clean repaſt,
Each night thy roof defends the chilly blaſt.
But vain is all thy friendſhip, vain thy care:
Forget a wretch abandon'd to deſpair.

LAURA.

Deſpair will fly thee, when thou ſhalt impart
The fatal ſecret that torments thy heart;

Diſcloſe thy ſorrows to my faithful ear,
Inſtruct thoſe eyes to give thee tear for tear.
Love, love's the cauſe; our foreſts ſpeak thy flame,
The rocks have learn'd to ſigh Evander's name.
If ſalt'ring ſhame thy baſhful tongue reſtrain,
If thou haſt look'd, and bluſh'd, and ſigh'd in vain;
Say, in what grove thy lovely ſhepherd ſtrays,
Tell me what mountains warble with his lays;
Thither I'll ſpeed me, and with moving art
Draw ſoft confeſſions from his melting heart.

DIONE.

Thy gen'rous care has touch'd my ſecret woe.
Love bids theſe ſcalding tears inceſſant flow,
Ill-fated love! O, ſay, ye ſylvan maids,
Who range wide foreſts and ſequeſter'd ſhades,
Say where Evander bled, point out the ground
That yet is purple with the ſavage wound.
Yonder he lies; I hear the bird of prey;
High o'er thoſe cliffs the raven wings his way;
Hark how he croaks! he ſcents the murder near.
O may no greedy beak his viſage tear!
Shield him, ye Cupids; ſtrip the Paphian grove,
And ſtrow unfading myrtle o'er my love!
Down, heaving heart.

LAURA.

——————The mournful tale diſcloſe.

DIONE.

Let not my tears intrude on thy repoſe.
Yet if thy friendſhip ſtill the cauſe requeſt;
I'll ſpeak; though ſorrow rend my lab'ring breaſt.
Know then, fair ſhepherdeſs; no honeſt ſwain
Taught me the duties of the peaceful plain;
Unus'd to ſweet content, no flocks I keep,
Nor browzing goats that overhang the ſteep.

Born where Orchomenos' proud turrets ſhine,
I trace my birth from long illuſtrious line,
Why was I train'd amidſt Arcadia's court?
Love ever revels in that gay reſort.
Whene'er Evander paſt, my ſmitten heart
Heav'd frequent ſighs, and felt unuſual ſmart.
Ah! hadſt thou ſeen with what ſweet grace he mov'd!
Yet why that wiſh? for Laura then had lov'd.

LAURA.

Diſtruſt me not; thy ſecret wrongs impart.

DIONE.

Forgive the ſallies of a breaking heart.
Evander's ſighs his mutual flame confeſt,
The growing paſſion labour'd in his breaſt;
To me he came; my heart with rapture ſprung,
To ſee the bluſhes, when his falt'ring tongue
Firſt ſaid, I love. my eyes conſent reveal,
And plighted vows our faithful paſſion ſeal.
Where's now the lovely youth? he's loſt, he's ſlain,
And the pale corſe lies breathleſs on the plain!

LAURA.

Are thus the hopes of conſtant lovers paid?
If thus——ye powers, from love defend the maid!

DIONE.

Now have twelve mornings warm'd the purple eaſt,
Since my dear hunter rouz'd the tusky beaſt;
Swift flew the foaming monſter thro' the wood,
Swift as the wind, his eager ſteps purſu'd:
'Twas then the ſavage turn'd; then fell the youth,
And his dear blood diſtain'd the barb'rous tooth.

LAURA.

Was there none near? no ready ſuccour found?
Nor healing herb to ſtanch the ſpouting wound?

DIONE.

In vain through pathleſs wood the hunters croſt,
And ſought with anxious eye their maſter loſt;
In vain their frequent hollows echo'd ſhrill,
And his lov'd name was ſent from hill to hill;
Evander hears you not. he's loſt, he's ſlain,
And the pale corſe lies breathleſs on the plain.

LAURA.

Has yet no clown (who, wandring from the way,
Beats ev'ry buſh to raiſe the lamb aſtray)
Obſerv'd the fatal ſpot?

DIONE.

——————————O, if ye paſs
Where purple murder dies the wither'd graſs,
With pious finger gently cloſe his eyes,
And let his grave with decent verdure riſe. [Weeps.

LAURA.

Behold the turtle who has loſt her mate:
Awhile with drooping wing ſhe mourns his fate,
Sullen, awhile ſhe ſeeks the darkeſt grove,
And cooing meditates the murder'd dove;
But time the rueful image wears away,
Again ſhe's chear'd, again ſhe ſeeks the day.
Spare then thy beauty, and no longer pine.

DIONE.

Yet ſure ſome turtle's love has equall'd mine,
Who, when the hawk has ſnatch'd her mate away,
Hath never known the glad return of day.
When my fond father ſaw my faded eye,
And on my livid cheek the roſes dye;
When catching ſighs my waſted boſom mov'd,
My looks, my ſighs confirm'd him that I lov'd.
He knew not that Evander was my flame,
Evander dead! my paſſion ſtill the ſame!

He came, he threatned ; with paternal ſway
Cleanthes nam'd, and fix'd the nuptial day:
O cruel kindneſs! too ſeverely preſt!
I ſcorn his honours, and his wealth deteſt.

LAURA.

How vain is force! love ne'er can be compell'd.

DIONE.

Though bound by duty, yet my heart rebell'd.
One night, when ſleep had huſh'd all buſy ſpies,
And the pale moon had journey'd half the skies;
Softly I roſe and dreſt; with ſilent tread,
Unbarr'd the gates; and to theſe mountains fled.
Here let me ſooth the melancholy hours!
Cloſe me, ye woods, within your twilight bow'rs!
Where my calm ſoul may ſettled ſorrow know,
And no Cleanthes interrupt my woe

[Melancholy muſic is heard at a diſtance.

With importuning love——On yonder plain
Advances ſlow a melancholy train;
Black cypreſs boughs their drooping heads adorn.

LAURA.

Alas! Menalcas to his grave is born.
Behold the victim of Parthenia's pride!
He ſaw, he ſigh'd, he lov'd, was ſcorn'd and dy'd.

DIONE.

Where dwells this beauteous tyrant of the plains?
Where may I ſee her?

LAURA.

——————————Ask the ſighing ſwains.
They beſt can ſpeak the conqueſts of her eyes,
Whoever ſees her, loves; who loves her, dies.

DIONE.

Perhaps untimely fate her flame hath croſt,
And ſhe, like me, hath her Evander loſt.

How my ſoul pities her!

LAURA.

——————————If pity move
Your generous boſom, pity thoſe who love.
There late arriv'd among our ſylvan race
A ſtranger ſhepherd, who with lonely pace
Viſits thoſe mountain pines at dawn of day,
Where oft' Parthenia takes her early way
To rouze the chaſe; mad with his am'rous pain,
He ſtops and raves; then ſullen walks again.
Parthenia's name is born by paſſing gales,
And talking hills repeat it to the dales.
Come, let us from this vale of ſorrow go,
Nor let the mournful ſcene prolong thy woe.

[Exeunt.

* SCENE II.

Shepherds and ſhepherdeſſes, (crown'd with garlands of cypreſs and yew) bearing the body of Menalcas.

I SHEPHERD.

Here gently reſt the corſe——with faltring breath
Thus ſpake Menalcas on the verge of death.
' Belov'd Palemon, hear a dying friend;
' See, where yon hils with craggy brows aſcend,
' Low in the valley where the mountain grows,
' There firſt I ſaw her, there began my woes.

* *This and the following ſcene are form'd upon the novel of Marcella in Don Quixote.*

'When I am cold, may there this clay be laid;
'There often ſtrays the dear the cruel maid,
'There as ſhe walks, perhaps you'll hear her ſay,
'(While a kind guſhing tear ſhall force its way)
'How could my ſtubborn heart relentleſs prove?
'Ah poor Menalcas——all thy fault was love!

2 SHEPHERD.

When pitying lions o'er a carcaſe groan,
And hungry tygers bleeding kids bemoan;
When the lean wolf laments the mangled ſheep;
Then ſhall Parthenia o'er Menalcas weep.

1 SHEPHERD.

When famiſh'd panthers ſeek their morning food,
And monſters roar along the deſart wood;
When hiſſing vipers ruſtle through the brake,
Or in the path-way rears the ſpeckled ſnake;
The wary ſwain th' approaching peril ſpies,
And through ſome diſtant road ſecurely flies.
Fly then, ye ſwains, from beauty's ſurer wound;
Such was the fate our poor Menalcas found!

2 SHEPHERD.

What ſhepherd does not mourn Menalcas ſlain?
Kill'd by a barbarous woman's proud diſdain!
Whoe'er attempts to bend her ſcornful mind,
Cries to the deſarts, and purſues the wind.

1 SHEPHERD.

With ev'ry grace Menalcas was endow'd,
His merits dazled all the ſylvan croud.
If you would know his pipe's melodious ſound,
Ask all the echoes of thoſe hills around,
For they have learn'd his ſtrains; who ſhall rehearſe
The ſtrength, the cadence of his tuneful verſe?
Go, read thoſe lofty poplars; there you'll find
Some tender ſonnet grow on ev'ry rind.

2 SHEPHERD.

Yet what avails his skill? Parthenia flies.
Can merit hope ſucceſs in woman's eyes?

1 SHEPHERD.

Why was Parthenia form'd of ſofteſt mold?
Why does her heart ſuch ſavage nature hold?
O ye kind gods! or all her charms efface,
Or tame her heart——ſo ſpare the ſhepherd race.

2 SHEPHERD.

As fade the flowers which on the grave I caſt;
So may Parthenia's tranſient beauty waſte!

1 SHEPHERD.

What woman ever counts the fleeting years,
Or ſees the wrinkle which her forehead wears?
Thinking her feature never ſhall decay,
This ſwain ſhe ſcorns, from that ſhe turns away.
But know, as when the roſe her bud unfolds,
Awhile each breaſt the ſhort-liv'd fragrance holds:
When the dry ſtalk lets drop her ſhrivell'd pride,
The lovely ruin's ever thrown aſide.
So ſhall Parthenia be.

2 SHEPHERD.

——————————————See, ſhe appears,
To boaſt her ſpoils, and triumph in our tears.

SCENE III.

Parthenia appears from the mountain.

PARTHENIA. SHEPHERDS.

I SHEPHERD.

Why this way doſt thou turn thy baneful eyes,
Pernicious baſilisk? lo! there he lies,
There lies the youth thy curſed beauty ſlew;
See, at thy preſence, how he bleeds anew!
Look down, enjoy thy murder.

PARTHENIA.

——————————Spare my fame;
I come to clear a virgin's injur'd name.
If I'm a baſilisk, the danger fly,
Shun the ſwift glances of my venom'd eye:
If I'm a murd'rer, why approach ye near,
And to the dagger lay your boſom bare?

I SHEPHERD.

What heart is proof againſt that face divine?
Love is not in our power.

PARTHENIA.

——————————Is love in mine?
If e'er I trifled with a ſhepherd's pain,
Or with falſe hope his paſſion ſtrove to gain;
Then might you juſtly curſe my ſavage mind,
Then might you rank me with the ſerpent kind:
But I ne'er trifled with a ſhepherd's pain,
Nor with falſe hopes his paſſion ſtrove to gain;
'Tis to his raſh purſuit he owes his fate,
I was not cruel; he was obſtinate.

I SHEPHERD.

Hear this, ye ſighing ſhepherds, and deſpair.
Unhappy Lycidas, thy hour is near!
Since the ſame barb'rous hand hath ſigned thy doom,
We'll lay thee in our lov'd Menalcas' tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Why will intruding man my peace deſtroy?
Let me content, and ſolitude enjoy;
Free was I born, my freedom to maintain,
Early I ſought the unambitious plain.
Moſt women's weak reſolves like reeds will ply,
Shake with each breath, and bend with ev'ry ſigh;
Mine, like an oak, whoſe firm roots deep deſcend,
No breath of love can ſhake, no ſigh can bend.
If ye unhappy Lycidas would ſave;
Go ſeek him, lead him to Menalcas' grave;
Forbid his eyes with flowing grief to rain,
Like him Menalcas wept, but wept in vain;
Bid him his heart-conſuming groans give o'er:
Tell him, I heard ſuch piercing groans before,
And heard unmov'd. O Lycidas, be wiſe,
Prevent thy fate.——lo! there Menalcas lies.

I SHEPHERD.

Now all the melancholy rites are paid,
And o'er his grave the weeping marble laid;
Let's ſeek our charge; the flocks diſperſing wide,
Whiten with moving fleece the mountain's ſide.
Truſt not, ye ſwains, the lightning of her eye,
Leſt ye, like him, ſhould love, deſpair, and dye.

[Exeunt Shepherds, &c. Parthenia remains in a melancholy poſture looking on the grave of Menalcas.

Enter Lycidas.

SCENE IV.

LYCIDAS. PARTHENIA.

LYCIDAS.

When ſhall my ſteps have reſt? through all the wood,
And by the winding banks of Ladon's flood
I ſought my love. O ſay, ye skipping fawns,
(Who range entangled ſhades and daiſy'd lawns)
If ye have ſeen her! ſay ye warbling race,
(Who meaſure on ſwift wing th' aerial ſpace,
And view below hills, dales, and diſtant ſhores)
Where ſhall I find her whom my ſoul adores!

SCENE V.

LYCIDAS. PARTHENIA. DIONE.
LAURA.

[Dione and Laura at a diſtance.

LYCIDAS.

What do I ſee? no. fancy mocks my eyes,
And bids the dear deluding viſion riſe.
'Tis ſhe. my ſpringing heart her preſence feels.
See, proſtrate Lycidas before thee kneels.
[Kneeling to Parthenia.
Why will Parthenia turn her face away?

PARTHENIA.

Who calls Parthenia? hah!
[She ſtarts from her melancholy; and ſeein Lycidas, flies into the wood.

LYCIDAS.

——————————Stay, virgin, ſtay.
O wing my feet, kind loves. ſee, ſee, ſhe bounds,
Fleet as the mountain roe, when preſt by hounds.
[He purſues her. Dione faints in the arms of Laura.

LAURA.

What means this trembling? all her colour flies,
And life is quite unſtrung. ah! lift thy eyes,
And anſwer me; ſpeak, ſpeak, 'tis Laura calls.
Speech has forſook her lips.——She faints, ſhe falls.
Fan her, ye Zephyrs, with your balmy breath,
And bring her quickly from the ſhades of death:
Blow, ye cool gales. ſee, ſee, the foreſt ſhakes
With coming winds! ſhe breathes, ſhe moves, ſhe wakes.

DIONE.

Ah falſe Evander!

LAURA.

——————————Calm thy ſobbing breaſt.
Say, what new ſorrow has thy heart oppreſt.

DIONE.

Didſt thou not hear his ſighs and ſuppliant tone?
Didſt thou not hear the pitying mountain grone?
Didſt thou not ſee him bend his ſuppliant knee?
Thus in my happy days he knelt to me,
And pour'd forth all his ſoul! ſee how he ſtrains,
And leſſens to the ſight o'er yonder plains
To keep the fair in view! run, virgin, run,
Hear not his vows; I heard, and was undone!

LAURA.

Let not imaginary terrors fright.
Some dark deluſion ſwims before thy ſight.
I ſaw Parthenia from the mountain's brow,
And Lycidas with proſtrate duty bow;

Swift as on falcon's wing, I ſaw her fly,
And heard the cavern to his groans reply.
Why ſtream thy tears for ſorrows not thy own?

DIONE.

Oh! where are honour, faith, and juſtice flown?
Perjur'd Evander!

LAURA.

——————————Death has laid him low.
Touch not the mournful ſtring that wakes thy woe.

DIONE.

That am'rous ſwain, whom Lycidas you name,
(Whoſe faithleſs boſom feels another flame)
Is my once kind Evander——yes——'twas he,
He lives.—but lives, alas! no more for me.

LAURA.

Let not thy frantic words confeſs deſpair.

DIONE.

What, know I not his voice, his mien, his air?
Yes, I that treach'rous voice with joy believ'd,
That voice, that mien, that air my ſoul deceiv'd,
If my dear ſhepherd love the lawns and glades,
With him I'll range the lawns and ſeek the ſhades,
With him through ſolitary deſarts rove.
But could he leave me for another love?
O baſe ingratitude!

LAURA.

——————————Suſpend thy grief,
And let my friendly counſel bring relief
To thy deſponding ſoul. Parthenia's ear
Is barr'd for ever to the lover's prayer;
Evander courts diſdain, he follows ſcorn,
And in the paſſing winds his vows are born.
Soon will he find that all in vain he ſtrove
To tame her boſom; then his former love

Shall wake his ſoul, then will he ſighing blame
His heart inconſtant, and his perjur'd flame:
Then ſhall he at Dione's feet implore,
Lament his broken faith, and change no more.

DIONE.

Perhaps this cruel nymph well knows to feign
Forbidding ſpeech, coy looks, and cold diſdain,
To raiſe his paſſion. ſuch are female arts,
To hold in ſafer ſnares inconſtant hearts!

LAURA.

Parthenia's breaſt is ſteel'd with real ſcorn.

DIONE.

And doſt thou think Evander will return?

LAURA.

Forgo thy ſex, lay all thy robes aſide,
Strip off theſe ornaments of female pride;
The ſhepherd's veſt muſt hide thy graceful air,
With the bold manly ſtep a ſwain appear;
Then with Evander may'ſt thou rove unknown,
Then let thy tender eloquence be ſhown;
Then the new fury of his heart controul,
And with Dione's ſufferings touch his ſoul.

DIONE.

Sweet as refreſhing dews, or ſummer ſhowers
To the long parching thirſt of drooping flowers;
Grateful as fanning gales to fainting ſwains,
And ſoft as trickling balm to bleeding pains,
Such are thy words. the ſex ſhall be reſign'd,
No more ſhall breaded gold theſe treſſes bind;
The ſhepherd's garb the woman ſhall diſguiſe.
If he has loſt all love, may friendſhip's tyes
Unite me to his heart!

LAURA.

——————————Go, proſp'rous maid,
May ſmiling love thy faithful wiſhes aid.

Be now Alexis call'd. with thee I'll rove,
And watch thy wand'rer thro' the mazy grove;
Let me be honour'd with a ſiſter's name;
For thee, I feel a more than ſiſter's flame.

DIONE.

Perhaps my ſhepherd has outſtript her haſte.
Think'ſt thou, when out of ſight, ſhe flew ſo faſt?
One ſudden glance might turn her ſavage mind;
May ſhe like Daphne fly, nor look behind,
Maintain her ſcorn, his eager flame deſpiſe,
Nor view Evander with Dione's eyes!

ACT II. SCENE I.

Lycidas lying on the grave of Menalcas.

LYCIDAS.

WHEN ſhall theſe ſcalding fountains ceaſe to flow?
How long will life ſuſtain this load of woe?
Why glows the morn? roll back, thou ſource of light,
And feed my ſorrows with eternal night.
Come, ſable death! give, give the welcome ſtroke;
The raven calls thee from yon blaſted oak.
What pious care my ghaſtful lid ſhall cloſe?
What decent hand my frozen limbs compoſe?
O happy ſhepherd, free from anxious pains,
Who now art wandring in the ſighing plains
Of bleſt Elyſium; where in myrtle groves
Enamour'd ghoſts bemoan their former loves.
Open, thou ſilent grave; for lo! I come
To meet Menalcas in the fragrant gloom;
There ſhall my boſom burn with friendſhip's flame,
The ſame our paſſion, and our fate the ſame;
There, like two nightingales on neighb'ring boughs,
Alternate ſtrains ſhall mourn our fruſtrate vows.
But if cold death ſhould cloſe Parthenia's eye,
And ſhould her beauteous form come gliding by;
Friendſhip would ſoon in jealous fear be loſt,
And kindling hate purſue thy rival ghoſt.

SCENE II.

LYCIDAS. DIONE in a ſhepherd's habit.

LYCIDAS.

Hah! who comes here? turn hence, be timely wiſe;
Truſt not thy ſafety to Parthenia's eyes.
As from the bearing faulcon flies the dove,
So, wing'd with fear, Parthenia flies from love.

DIONE.

If in theſe vales the fatal beauty ſtray,
From the cold marble riſe; let's haſte away,
Why lie you panting, like the ſmitten deer?
Truſt not the dangers which you bid me fear.

LYCIDAS.

Bid the lur'd lark, whom tangling nets ſurpriſe,
On ſoaring pinion rove the ſpacious skies;
Bid the cag'd linnet range the leafy grove;
Then bid my captive heart get looſe from love.
The ſnares of death are o'er me. hence; beware;
Leſt you ſhould ſee her, and like me deſpair.

DIONE.

No. let her come; and ſeek this vale's receſs,
In all the beauteous negligence of dreſs;
Though Cupid ſend a ſhaft in ev'ry glance,
Though all the graces in her ſtep advance,
My heart can ſtand it all. be firm, my breaſt;
Th' enſnaring oath, the broken vow deteſt:
That flame, which other charms have pow'r to move,
O give it not the ſacred name of love!

'Tis perjury, fraud, and meditated lies.
Love's ſeated in the ſoul, and never dies.
What then avail her charms? my conſtant heart
Shall gaze ſecure, and mock a ſecond dart.

LYCIDAS.

But you perhaps a happier fate have found,
And the ſame hand that gave, now heals the wound;
Or art thou left abandon'd and forlorn,
A wretch, like me, the ſport of pride and ſcorn?

DIONE.

O tell me, ſhepherd, hath thy faithleſs maid
Falſe to her vow thy flatter'd hope betray'd?
Did her ſmooth ſpeech engage thee to believe?
Did ſhe proteſt and ſwear, and then deceive?
Such are the pangs I feel!

LYCIDAS.

——————————The haughty fair
Contemns my ſuff'rings, and diſdains to hear.
Let meaner beauties learn'd in female ſnares
Entice the ſwain with half-conſenting airs;
Such vulgar arts ne'er aid her conqu'ring eyes,
And yet, where-e'er ſhe turns, a lover ſighs.
Vain is the ſteady conſtancy you boaſt;
All other love at ſight of her is loſt.

DIONE.

True conſtancy no time, no power can move.
He that hath known to change, ne'er knew to love.
Though the dear author of my hapleſs flame
Purſue another; ſtill my heart's the ſame.
Am I for ever left? (excuſe theſe tears)
May your kind friendſhip ſoften all my cares!

LYCIDAS.

What comfort can a wretch, like me, beſtow?

DIONE.

He beſt can pity who hath felt the woe.

LYCIDAS.

Since diff'rent objects have our ſouls poſſeſt,
No rival fears our friendſhip ſhall moleſt.

DIONE.

Come let us leave the ſhade of theſe brown hills,
And drive our flocks beſide the ſteaming rills,
Should the fair tyrant to theſe vales return,
How would thy breaſt with double fury burn!
Go hence, and ſeek thy peace.

SCENE III.

LYCIDAS. DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

——————————Fly, fly this place;
Beware of love; the proudeſt of her race
This way approaches: from among the pines,
Where from the ſteep the winding path declines,
I ſaw the nymph deſcend.

LYCIDAS.

——————————She comes, ſhe comes;
From her the paſſing Zephyrs ſteal perfumes,
As from the vi'let's bank; with odours ſweet
Breathes ev'ry gale; ſpring blooms beneath her feet.
Yes, 'tis my faireſt; here ſhe's wont to rove.

LAURA.

Say, by what ſigns I might have known thy love?

LYCIDAS.

My love is fairer than the ſnowy breaſt
Of the tall ſwan, whoſe proudly-ſwelling cheſt
Divides the wave; her treſſes looſe behind,
Play on her neck, and wanton in the wind;
The riſing bluſhes, which her cheek o'er-ſpread,
Are op'ning roſes in the lily's bed.
Know'ſt thou Parthenia?

LAURA.

——————————Wretched is the ſlave
Who ſerves ſuch pride! behold Menalcas' grave!
Yet if Alexis and this ſighing ſwain
Wiſh to behold the tyrant of the plain,
Let us behind theſe myrtles twining arms
Retire unſeen; from thence ſurvey her charms,
Wild as the chaunting thruſh upon the ſpray,
At man's approach ſhe ſwiftly flies away.
Like the young hare, I've ſeen the panting maid
Stop, liſten, run; of ev'ry wind afraid.

LYCIDAS.

And wilt thou never from thy vows depart?
Shepherd, beware——now fortify thy heart.
[To Dione.

[Lycidas, Dione, and Laura retire behind the boughs.

SCENE IV.

PARTHENIA. LYCIDAS. DIONE. LAURA.

PARTHENIA.

This melancholy ſcene demands a grone.
Hah! what inſcription marks the weeping ſtone?
'O pow'r of beauty! here Menalcas lies.
'Gaze not, ye ſhepherds, on Parthenia's eyes.'
Why did heav'n form me with ſuch poliſh'd care?
Why caſt my features in a mold ſo fair?
If blooming beauty was a bleſſing meant,
Why are my ſighing hours deny'd content?
The downy peach, that glows with ſunny dyes,
Feeds the black ſnail, and lures voracious flies;
The juicy pear invites the feather'd kind,
And pecking finches ſcoop the golden rind;
But beauty ſuffers more pernicious wrongs,
Blaſted by envy, and cenſorious tongues.
How happy lives the nymph, whoſe comely face
And pleaſing glances boaſt ſufficient grace
To wound the ſwain ſhe loves! no jealous fears
Shall vex her nuptial ſtate with nightly tears,
Nor am'rous youths, to puſh their foul pretence,
Infeſt her days with dull impertinence.
But why talk I of love? my guarded heart
Diſowns his pow'r, and turns aſide the dart.
Hark! from his hollow tomb Menalcas cries,
'Gaze not, ye ſhepherds, on Parthenia's eyes.'

Come, Lycidas, the mournful lay peruſe,
Leſt thou, like him, Parthenia's eyes accuſe.

[She ſtands in a melancholy poſture looking on the tomb.

LYCIDAS.

Call'd ſhe not Lycidas?—I come, my fair;
See gen'rous pity melts into a tear,
And her heart ſoftens. now's the tender hour,
Aſſiſt me, love, exert thy ſov'reign power
To tame the ſcornful maid.

DIONE.

——————————Raſh ſwain, be wiſe:
'Tis not from thee or him, from love ſhe flies.
Leave her, forget her. [They hold Lycidas.

LAURA.

——————————Why this furious haſte?

LYCIDAS.

Unhand me; looſe me.

DIONE.

——————————Siſter, hold him faſt,
To follow her, is, to prolong deſpair.
Shepherd, you muſt not go.

LYCIDAS.

——————————Bold youth, forbear.
Hear me, Parthenia.

PARTHENIA.

——————————From behind the ſhade
Methought a voice ſome liſt'ning ſpy betray'd.
Yes, I'm obſerv'd.

[She runs out.

LYCIDAS.

——————Stay, nymph; thy flight ſuſpend:
She hears me not—when will my ſorrows end!

As over-ſpent with toil, my heaving breaſt
Beats quick. 'tis death alone can give me reſt.
[He remains in a fixt melancholy.

SCENE V.

LYCIDAS. DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

Recall thy ſcatter'd ſenſe, bid reaſon wake,
Subdue thy paſſion.

LYCIDAS.

——————————Shall I never ſpeak?
She's gone, ſhe's gone.—kind ſhepherd, let me reſt
My troubled head upon thy friendly breaſt.
The foreſt ſeems to move,——O curſed ſtate!
I doom'd to love, and ſhe condemn'd to hate!
Tell me, Alexis, art thou ſtill the ſame?
Did not her brighter eyes put out the flame
Of thy firſt love? did not thy flutt'ring heart,
Whene'er ſhe rais'd her look, confeſs the dart?

DIONE.

I own the nymph is faireſt of her race,
Yet I unmov'd can on this beauty gaze,
Mindful of former promiſe; all that's dear,
My thoughts, my dreams; my ev'ry wiſh is there.
Since then our hopes are loſt; let friendſhip's tye
Calm our diſtreſs, and ſlighted love ſupply;
Let us together drive our fleecy ſtore,
And of ungrateful woman think no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis death alone can raze her from my breaſt.

LAURA.

Why ſhines thy love ſo far above the reſt?
Nature, 'tis true, in ev'ry outward grace,
Her niceſt hand employ'd; her lovely face
With beauteous feature ſtampt; with roſy dyes
Warm'd her fair cheek; with lightning arm'd her eyes:
But if thou ſearch the ſecrets of her mind,
Where ſhall thy cheated ſoul a virtue find?
Sure hell with cruelty her breaſt ſupply'd.
How did ſhe glory when Menalcas dy'd!
Pride in her boſom reigns; ſhe's falſe, ſhe's vain;
She firſt entices, then inſults the ſwain;
Shall female cunning lead thy heart aſtray?
Shepherd, be free; and ſcorn for ſcorn repay.

LYCIDAS.

How woman talks of woman!

DIONE.

——————Hence depart;
Let a long abſence cure thy love-ſick heart.
To ſome far grove retire, her ſight diſclaim,
Nor with her charms awake the dying flame.
Let not an hour thy happy flight ſuſpend;
But go not, Lycidas, without thy friend.
Together let us ſeek the cheerful plains,
And lead the dance among the ſportive ſwains,
Devoid of care.

LAURA.

——————Or elſe the groves diſdain,
Nor with the ſylvan walk indulge thy pain.
Haſte to the town; there (I have oft' been told)
The courtly nymph her treſſes binds with gold,

To captivate the youths; the youths appear
In fine array; in ringlets waves their hair
Rich with ambrosial scents, the fair to move,
And all the business of the day is love.
There from the gawdy train select a dame,
Her willing glance shall catch an equal flame.

LYCIDAS.

Name not the court.—the thought my soul confounds,
And with Dione's wrongs my bosom wounds.
Heav'n justly vindicates the faithful maid;
And now are all my broken vows repaid.
Perhaps she now laments my fancy'd death
With tears unfeign'd; and thinks my gasping breath
Sigh'd forth her name. O guilt, no more upbraid!
Yes. I fond innocence and truth betray'd. [Aside.

[Dione and Laura apart.

DIONE.

Hark! how reflection wakes his conscious heart.
From my pale lids the trickling sorrows start;
How shall my breast the swelling sighs confine!

LAURA.

O smooth thy brow, conceal our just design:
Be yet a while unknown. if grief arise,
And force a passage through thy gushing eyes,
Quickly retire, thy sorrows to compose;
Or with a look serene disguise thy woes.

[Dione is going out. Laura walks at a distance.

LYCIDAS.

Canst thou, Alexis, leave me thus distrest?
Where's now the boasted friendship of thy breast?
Hast thou not oft' survey'd the dappled deer
In social herds o'er-spread the pastures fair,
When op'ning hounds the warmer scent pursue,
And force the destin'd victim from the crew,

Oft' he returns, and fain would join the band,
While all their horns the panting wretch withſtand?
Such is thy friendſhip; thus might I confide.

DIONE.

Why wilt thou cenſure what thou nee'r haſt try'd?
Sooner ſhall ſwallows leave their callow brood,
Who with their plaintive chirpings cry for food;
Sooner ſhall hens expoſe their infant care,
When the ſpread kite ſails wheeling in the air,
Than I forſake thee when by danger preſt;
Wrong not by jealous fears a faithful breaſt.

LYCIDAS.

If thy fair-ſpoken tongue thy boſom ſhows,
There let the ſecrets of my ſoul repoſe.

DIONE.

Far be ſuſpicion; in my truth confide,
O let my heart thy load of cares divide!

LYCIDAS.

Know then, Alexis, that in vain I ſtrove
To break her chain, and free my ſoul from love;
On the lim'd twig thus finches beat their wings,
Still more entangled in the clammy ſtrings.
The ſlow-pac'd days have witneſs'd my deſpair,
Upon my weary couch ſits wakeful care;
Down my fluſh'd cheek the flowing ſorrows run,
As dews deſcend to weep the abſent ſun.
O loſt Parthenia!

DIONE.

——————These wild thoughts ſuſpend;
And in thy kind commands inſtruct thy friend.

LYCIDAS.

Whene'er my faltring tongue would urge my cauſe,
Deaf is her ear, and ſullen ſhe withdraws.

Go then, Alexis, ſeek the ſcornful maid,
In tender eloquence my ſuff'rings plead;
Of ſlighted paſſion you the pangs have known;
O judge my ſecret anguiſh by your own!

DIONE.

Had I the skill inconſtant hearts to move,
My longing ſoul had never loſt my love.
My feeble tongue, in theſe ſoft arts untry'd,
Can ill ſupport the thunder of her pride;
When ſhe ſhall bid me to thy bower repair,
How ſhall my trembling lips her threats declare!
How ſhall I tell thee, that ſhe could behold,
With brow ſerene, thy corſe all pale and cold
Beat on the daſhing billow? ſhouldſt thou go
Where the tall hill o'er-hangs the rocks below,
Near thee thy tyrant could unpitying ſtand,
Nor call thee back, nor ſtretch a ſaving hand.
Wilt thou then ſtill perſiſt to tempt thy fate,
To feed her pride and gratify her hate?

LYCIDAS.

Know, unexperienc'd youth, that woman's mind
Oft' ſhifts her paſſions, like th' inconſtant wind;
Sudden ſhe rages, like the troubled main,
Now ſinks the ſtorm, and all is calm again.
Watch the kind moment, then my wrongs impart,
And the ſoft tale ſhall glide into her heart.

DIONE.

No. let her wander in the lonely grove,
And never hear the tender voice of love.
Let her a while, neglected by the ſwain,
Paſs by, nor ſighs moleſt the cheerful plain;
Thus ſhall the fury of her pride be laid;
Thus humble into love the haughty maid.

LYCIDAS.

Vain are attempts my paſſion to controul.
Is this the balm to cure my fainting ſoul?

DIONE.

Deep then among the green-wood ſhades I'll rove,
And ſeek with weary'd pace thy wander'd love;
Proſtrate I'll fall, and with inceſſant prayers
Hang on her knees, and bath her feet with tears;
If ſighs of pity can her ear incline,
(O Lycidas, my life is wrapt in thine!) [Aſide.
I'll charge her from thy voice to hear the tale,
Thy voice more ſweet than notes along the vale
Breath'd from the warbling pipe: the moving ſtrain
Shall ſtay her flight, and conquer her diſdain.
Yet if ſhe hear; ſhould love the meſſage ſpeed,
Then dies all hope;——then muſt Dione bleed.
[Aſide.

LYCIDAS.

Haſte then, dear faithful ſwain. beneath thoſe yews
Whoſe ſable arms the browneſt ſhade diffuſe,
Where all around, to ſhun the ſervent sky,
The panting flocks in ferny thickets lie;
There with impatience ſhall I wait my friend,
O'er the wide proſpect frequent glances ſend
To ſpy thy wiſh'd return. as thou ſhalt find
A tender welcome, may thy love be kind!
[Ex. Lycidas.

SCENE VI.

DIONE. LAURA.

DIONE.

Methinks I'm now ſurrounded by deſpair,
And all my with'ring hopes are loſt in air.
Thus the young linnet on the rocking bough
Hears through long woods autumnal tempeſts blow,
With hollow blaſts the claſhing branches bend,
And yellow ſhow'rs of ruſtling leaves deſcend:
She ſees the friendly ſhelter from her fly,
Nor dare her little pinions truſt the sky;
But on the naked ſpray in wintry air,
All ſhiv'ring, hopeleſs, mourns the dying year.
What have I promis'd? raſh, unthinking maid!
By thy own tongue thy wiſhes are betray'd!

[Laura advances.

LAURA.

Why wak'ſt thou thus diſturb'd with frantic air?
Why roll thy eyes with madneſs and deſpair?

DIONE. [muſing.

How wilt thou bear to ſee her pride give way?
When thus the yielding nymph ſhall bid thee ſay,
'Let not the ſhepherd ſeek the ſilent grave,
'Say, that I bid him live.——if hope can ſave.

LAURA.

Hath he diſcern'd thee through the ſwain's diſguiſe,
And now alike thy love and friendſhip flies?

DIONE.

Yes. firm and faithful to the promiſe made,
I'll range each ſunny hill, each lawn and glade.

LAURA.

'Tis Laura ſpeaks. O calm your troubled mind.

DIONE.

Where ſhall my ſearch this envy'd beauty find?
I'll go, my faithleſs ſhepherd's cauſe to plead,
And with my tears accuſe the rival maid.
Yet, ſhould her ſoften'd heart to love incline!

LAURA.

If thoſe are all thy fears; Evander's thine.

DIONE.

Why ſhould we both in ſorrow waſte our days?
If love unfeign'd my conſtant boſom ſways,
His happineſs alone is all I prize,
And that is center'd in Parthenia's eyes.
Haſte then, with earneſt zeal her love implore,
To bleſs his hours;—when thou ſhalt breathe no more.

ACT III. SCENE I.

DIONE lying on the ground by the ſide of a fountain.

DIONE.

HERE let me reſt, and in the liquid glaſs
View with impartial look my fading face.
Why are Parthenia's ſtriking beauties priz'd?
And why Dione's weaker glance deſpis'd?
Nature in various molds has beauty caſt,
And form'd the feature for each different taſte:
This ſighs for golden locks and azure eyes;
That, for the gloſs of ſable treſſes, dyes.
Let all mankind theſe locks, theſe eyes deteſt,
So I were lovely in Evander's breaſt!
When o'er the garden's knot we caſt our view,
While ſummer paints the ground with various hues;
Some praiſe the gaudy tulip's ſtreaky red,
And ſome the ſilver lily's bending head;
Some the junquil in ſhining yellow dreſt,
And ſome the fring'd carnation's varied veſt;
Some love the ſober vi'let's purple dyes.
Thus beauty fares in diff'rent lovers eyes.
But bright Parthenia like the roſe appears,
She in all eyes ſuperior luſtre bears.

SCENE II.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

Why thus beneath the ſilver willow laid,
Weeps fair Dione in the penſive ſhade?
Haſt thou yet found the over-arching bower,
Which guards Parthenia from the ſultry hour?

DIONE.

With weary ſtep in paths unknown I ſtray'd,
And ſought in vain the ſolitary maid.

LAURA.

Seeſt thou the waving tops of yonder woods,
Whoſe aged arms imbrown the cooling floods?
The cooling floods o'er breaking pebbles flow,
And waſh the ſoil from the big roots below;
From the tall rock the daſhing waters bound.
Hark, o'er the fields the ruſhing billows ſound!
There, loſt in thought, and leaning on her crook,
Stood the ſad nymph, nor rais'd her penſive look;
With ſettled eye the bubbling waves ſurvey'd,
And watch'd the whirling eddys, as they play'd.

DIONE.

Thither to know my certain doom I ſpeed,
For by this ſentence life or death's decreed. [Exit.

SCENE III.

LAURA. CLEANTHES.

LAURA.

But ſee! ſome haſty ſtranger bends this way;
His broider'd veſt reflects the ſunny ray:
Now through the thinner boughs I mark his mien,
Now veil'd, in thicker ſhades he moves unſeen.
Hither he turns; I hear a mutt'ring ſound;
Behind this rev'rend oak with ivy bound
Quick I'll retire; with buſy thought poſſeſt,
His tongue betrays the ſecrets of his breaſt.
[She hides herſelf.

CLEANTHES.

The skilful hunter with experienc'd care
Traces the doubles of the circling hare;
The ſubtle fox, (who breathes the weary hound
O'er hills and plains) in diſtant brakes is found;
With eaſe we track ſwift hinds and skipping roes,
But who th' inconſtant ways of woman knows?
They ſay, ſhe wanders with the ſylvan train,
And courts the native freedoms of the plain;
Shepherds explain their wiſh without offence,
Nor bluſh the nymphs;—for love is innocence.
O lead me where the rural youth retreat,
Where the ſlope hills the warbling voice repeat.
Perhaps on daiſy'd turf reclines the maid,
And near her ſide ſome rival clown is laid,

Yet, yet I love her.——O loſt nymph return,
Let not thy ſire with tears inceſſant mourn;
Return, loſt nymph; bid ſorrow ceaſe to flow,
And let Dione glad the houſe of woe.

LAURA.

Call'd he not loſt Dione? hence I'll ſtart,
Croſs his ſlow ſteps, and ſift his op'ning heart. [Aſide.

CLEANTHES.

Tell me, fair nymph, direct my wandring way;
Where, in cloſe bowers, to ſhun the ſultry ray,
Repoſe the ſwains; whoſe flocks with bleating fill
The bord'ring foreſt and the thymy hill.
But if thou frequent join thoſe ſylvan bands,
Thy ſelf can anſwer what my ſoul demands.

LAURA.

Seven years I trod theſe fields, theſe bowers and glades,
And by the leſs'ning and the length'ning ſhades
Have mark'd the hours; what time my flock to lead
To ſunny mountains, or the watry mead:
Train'd in the labours of the ſylvan crew,
Their ſports, retreats, their cares and loves I knew.

CLEANTHES.

Inſtruct me then, if late among your race,
A ſtranger nymph is found, of noble grace,
In rural arts unskill'd, no charge ſhe tends:
Nor when the morn and ev'ning dew deſcends
Milks the big-udder'd ewe. her mien and dreſs
The poliſh'd manners of the court confeſs.

LAURA.

Each day arrive the neighb'ring nymphs and ſwains
To ſhare the paſtime of our jovial plains;
How can I there thy roving beauty trace,
Where not one nymph is bred of vulgar race?

CLEANTHES.

If yet ſhe breathe, what tortures muſt ſhe find!
The curſe of diſobedience tears her mind.
If e'er your breaſt with filial duty burn'd,
If e'er you ſorrow'd when a parent mourn'd;
Tell her, I charge you, with inceſſant groans
Her drooping ſire his abſent child bemoans.

LAURA.

Unhappy man!

CLEANTHES.

——————With ſtorms of paſſion toſt,
When firſt he learnt his vagrant child was loſt,
On the cold floor his trembling limbs he flung,
And with thick blows his hollow boſom rung;
Then up he ſtarted, and with fixt ſurpriſe,
Upon her picture threw his frantic eyes,
While thus he cry'd. 'In her my life was bound,
'Warm in each feature is her mother found!
'Perhaps deſpair has been her fatal guide,
'And now ſhe floats upon the weeping tide;
'Or on the willow hung, with head reclin'd,
'All pale and cold ſhe wavers in the wind.
'Did I not force her hence by harſh commands?
'Did not her ſoul abhor the nuptial bands?

LAURA.

Teach not, ye ſires, your daughters to rebel,
By counſel rein their wills, but ne'er compel.

CLEANTHES.

Ye duteous daughters, truſt theſe tender guides;
Nor think a parent's breaſt the tyrant hides.

LAURA.

From either lid the ſcalding ſorrows roll;
The moving tale runs thrilling to my ſoul.

CLEANTHES.

Perhaps ſhe wanders in the lonely woods,
Or on the ſedgy borders of the floods;
Thou know'ſt each cottage, foreſt, hill and vale,
And pebbled brook that winds along the dale.
Search each ſequeſter'd dell to find the fair;
And juſt reward ſhall gratify thy care.

LAURA.

O ye kind boughs protect the virgin's flight,
And guard Dione from his prying ſight! [Aſide.

CLEANTHES.

Mean while I'll ſeek the ſhepherd's cool abodes,
Point me, fair nymph, along theſe doubtful roads.

LAURA.

Seeſt thou yon' mountain rear his ſhaggy brow?
In the green valley graze the flocks below:
There ev'ry gale with warbling muſic floats,
Shade anſwers ſhade, and breathes alternate notes.
[Exit Cleanthes.
He's gone; and to the diſtant vales is ſent,
Nor ſhall his force Dione's love prevent.
But ſee, ſhe comes again with haſty pace,
And conſcious pleaſure dimples on her face.

SCENE IV.

LAURA. DIONE.

DIONE.

I found her laid beſide the cryſtal brook,
Nor rais'd ſhe from the ſtream her ſettled look,
Till near her ſide I ſtood; her head ſhe rears,
Starts ſudden, and her ſhrieks confeſs her fears.

LAURA.

Did not thy words her thoughtful ſoul ſurpriſe,
And kindle ſparkling anger in her eyes?

DIONE.

Thus ſhe reply'd, with rage and ſcorn poſſeſt.
'Will importuning love ne'er give me reſt?
'Why am I thus in deſarts wild purſu'd,
'Like guilty conſciences when ſtain'd with blood?
'Sure boding ravens, from the blaſted oak,
'Shall learn the name of Lycidas to croak,
'To ſound it in my ears! as ſwains paſs by,
'With look askance, they shake their heads and cry,
'Lo! this is ſhe for whom the ſhepherd dy'd!
'Soon Lycidas, a victim to her pride,
'Shall ſeek the grave; and in the glimm'ring glade,
'With look all pale, ſhall glide the reſtleſs ſhade
'Of the poor ſwain; while we with haggard eye
'And briſtled hair the fleeting phantom fly.
Still let their curſes innocence upbraid:
Heav'n never will forſake the virtuous maid.

LAURA.

Didſt thou perſiſt to touch her haughty breaſt!

DIONE.

She ſtill the more diſdain'd, the more I preſt.

LAURA.

When you were gone, theſe walks a ſtranger croſt,
He turn'd through ev'ry path, and wander'd loſt;
To me he came; with courteous ſpeech demands
Beneath what bowers repos'd the ſhepherd bands;
Then further asks me, if among that race
A ſhepherdeſs was found of courtly grace;
With profer'd bribes my faithful tongue eſſays;
But for no bribe the faithful tongue betrays.
In me Dione's ſafe. far hence he ſpeeds,
Where other hills reſound with other reeds.

DIONE.

Should he come back; ſuſpicion's jealous eyes
Might trace my feature through the ſwain's diſguiſe.
Now ev'ry noiſe and whiſtling wind I dread,
And in each ſound approaches human tread.

LAURA.

He ſaid, he left your houſe involv'd in cares,
Sighs ſwell'd each breaſt, each eye o'erflow'd with tears;
For his loſt child thy penſive father mourns,
And ſunk in ſorrow to the duſt returns.
Go back, obedient daughter; hence depart,
And ſtill the ſighs that tear his anxious heart.
Soon ſhall Evander, wearied with diſdain,
Forego theſe fields, and ſeek the town again.

DIONE.

Think, Laura, what thy haſty thoughts perſuade.
If I return, to love a victim made,
My wrathful ſire will force his harſh command,
And with Cleanthes join my trembling hand.

LAURA.

Truſt a fond father; raiſe him from deſpair.

DIONE.

I fly not him; I fly a life of care.
On the high nuptials of the court look round;
Where ſhall, alas, one happy pair be found!
There marriage is for ſervile int'reſt ſought:
Is love for wealth or power or title bought?
'Tis hence domeſtic jars their peace deſtroy,
And looſe adult'ry ſteals the ſhameful joy.
But ſearch we wide o'er all the bliſsful plains,
Where love alone, devoid of int'reſt, reigns.
What concord in each happy pair appears!
How fondneſs ſtrengthens with the rolling years!
Superior power ne'er thwarts their ſoft delights,
Nor jealous accuſations wake their nights.

LAURA.

May all thoſe bleſſings on Dione fall.

DIONE.

Grant me Evander, and I ſhare them all.
Shall a fond parent give perpetual ſtrife,
And doom his child to be a wretch for life?
Though he bequeath'd me all theſe woods and plains,
And all the flocks the ruſſet down contains;
With all the golden harveſts of the year,
Far as where yonder purple mountains rear;
Can theſe the broils of nuptial life prevent?
Can theſe, without Evander, give content?
But ſee, he comes.

LAURA.

——————————I'll to the vales repair,
Where wanders by the ſtream my fleecy care,
Mayſt thou the rage of this new flame controul,
And wake Dione in his tender ſoul! [Ex. Laura.

SCENE V.

DIONE. LYCIDAS.

LYCIDAS.

Say, my Alexis, can thy words impart
Kind rays of hope to cheer a doubtful heart?
How didſt thou firſt my pangs of love diſcloſe?
Did her diſdainful brow confirm my woes?
Or did ſoft pity in her boſom riſe,
Heave on her breaſt, and languiſh in her eyes?

DIONE.

How ſhall my tongue the falt'ring tale explain!
My heart drops blood to give the ſhepherd pain.

LYCIDAS.

Pronounce her utmoſt ſcorn; I come prepar'd
To meet my doom. ſay, is my death declar'd?

DIONE.

Why ſhould thy fate depend on woman's will?
Forget this tyrant, and be happy ſtill.

LYCIDAS.

Didſt thou beſeech her not to ſpeed her flight,
Nor ſhun with wrathful glance my hated ſight?
Will ſhe conſent my ſighing plaint to hear,
Nor let my piercing crys be loſt in air?

DIONE.

Can mariners appeaſe the toſſing ſtorm,
When foaming waves the yawning deep deform?
When o'er the ſable cloud the thunder flies,
Say, who ſhall calm the terror of the skies?

Who ſhall the lion's famiſh'd roar aſſwage;
And can we ſtill proud woman's ſtronger rage?
Soon as my faithful tongue pronounc'd thy name,
Sudden her glances ſhot reſentful flame:
Be dumb, ſhe cries, this whining love give o'er,
And vex me with the teazing theme no more.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis pride alone that keeps alive her ſcorn,
On the mean ſwain in humble cottage born,
Can poverty that haughty heart obtain
Where avarice and ſtrong ambition reign?
If poverty paſs by in tatter'd coat,
Curs vex his heels and ſtretch their barking throat;
If chance he mingle in the female croud,
Pride toſſes high her head, ſcorn laughs aloud;
Each nymph turns from him to her gay gallant,
And wonders at the impudence of want.
'Tis vanity that rules all woman-kind,
Love is the weakeſt paſſion of their mind.

DIONE.

Though one is by thoſe ſervile views poſſeſt,
O Lycidas, condemn not all the reſt.

LYCIDAS.

Though I were bent beneath a load of years,
And ſeventy winters thin'd my hoary hairs;
Yet if my olive branches dropt with oil,
And crooked ſhares were brighten'd in my ſoil,
If lowing herds my fat'ning meads poſſeſt,
And my white fleece the tawny mountain dreſt;
Then would ſhe lure me with love-darting glance,
Then with fond mercenary ſmiles advance.
Though hell with ev'ry vice my ſoul had ſtain'd,
And froward anger in my boſom reign'd,

Though avarice my coffers cloath'd in ruſt,
And my joints trembled with enfeebled luſt;
Yet were my antient name with titles great,
How would ſhe languiſh for the gaudy bait!
If to her love all-tempting wealth pretend,
What virtuous woman can her heart defend?

DIONE.

Conqueſts, thus meanly bought, men ſoon deſpiſe,
And juſtly ſlight the mercenary prize.

LYCIDAS.

I know theſe frailties in her breaſt reſide,
Direct her glance and ev'ry action guide,
Still let Alexis' faithful friendſhip aid,
Once more attempt to bend the ſtubborn maid.
Tell her, no baſe-born ſwain provokes her ſcorn,
No clown, beneath the ſedgy cottage born;
Tell her, for her this ſylvan dreſs I took,
For her my name and pomp of courts forſook;
My lofty roofs with golden ſculpture ſhine,
And my high birth deſcends from antient line.

DIONE.

Love is a ſacred voluntary fire,
Gold never bought that pure, that chaſte deſire.
Who thinks true love for lucre to poſſeſs,
Shall graſp falſe flatt'ry and the feign'd careſs;
Can we believe that mean, that ſervile wife,
Who vilely ſells her dear-bought love for life,
Would not her virtue for an hour reſign,
If in her ſight the profer'd treaſure ſhine.

LYCIDAS.

Can reaſon (when by winds ſwift fires are born
O'er waving harveſts of autumnal corn)
The driving fury of the flame reprove?
Who then ſhall reaſon with a heart in love?

DIONE.

Yet let me ſpeak; O may my words perſuade
The noble youth, to quit this ſylvan maid!
Reſign thy crook, no more to plains reſort,
Look round on all the beauties of the court;
There ſhall thy merit find a worthy flame,
Some nymph of equal wealth and equal name.
Think, if theſe offers ſhould thy wiſh obtain,
And ſhould the ruſtic beauty ſtoop to gain;
Thy heart could ne'er prolong th' unequal fire,
The ſudden blaze would in one year expire;
Then thy raſh folly thou too late ſhalt chide,
To poverty and baſe-born blood ally'd;
Her vulgar tongue ſhall animate the ſtrife,
And hourly diſcord vex thy future life.

LYCIDAS.

Such is the force thy faithful words impart,
That like the galling goad they pierce my heart.
You think fair virtue in my breaſt reſides,
That honeſt truth my lips and actions guides,
Deluded ſhepherd, could you view my ſoul,
You'd ſee it with deceit and treach'ry foul?
I'm baſe, perfidious. ere from court I came,
Love ſingled from the train a beauteous dame;
The tender maid my fervent vows believ'd,
My fervent vows the tender maid deceiv'd,
Why doſt thou tremble? —why thus heave thy ſighs?
Why ſteal the ſilent ſorrows from thy eyes?

DIONE.

Sure the ſoft lamb hides rage within his breaſt,
And cooing turtles are with hate poſſeſt;
When from ſo ſweet a tongue flow fraud and lies,
And thoſe meek looks a perjur'd heart diſguiſe.

Ah! who ſhall now on faithleſs man depend?
The treach'rous lover proves as falſe a friend.

LYCIDAS.

When with Dione's love my boſom glow'd,
Firm conſtancy and truth ſincere I vow'd;
But ſince Parthenia's brighter charms were known,
My love, my conſtancy and truth are flown.

DIONE.

Are not thy hours with conſcious anguiſh ſtung?
Swift vengeance muſt o'ertake the perjur'd tongue.
The gods the cauſe of injur'd love aſſert,
And arm with ſtubborn pride Parthenia's heart.

LYCIDAS.

Go, try her; tempt her with my birth and ſtate,
Stronger ambition will ſubdue her hate.

DIONE.

O rather turn thy thoughts on that loſt maid,
Whoſe hourly ſighs thy faithleſs oath upbraid!
Think you behold her at the dead of night,
Plac'd by the glimm'ring taper's paly light,
With all your letters ſpread before her view,
While trickling tears the tender lines bedew;
Sobbing ſhe reads the perj'ries o'er and o'er,
And her long nights know peaceful ſleep no more.

LYCIDAS.

Let me forget her.

DIONE.

——————————O falſe youth, relent;
Think ſhould Parthenia to thy hopes conſent;
When Hymen join your hands, and muſic's voice
Makes the glad echoes of thy domes rejoice,
Then ſhall Dione force the crouded hall,
Kneel at thy feet and loud for juſtice call;

Could you behold her weltring on the ground,
The purple dagger reeking from the wound?
Could you unmov'd this dreadful ſight ſurvey?
Such fatal ſcenes ſhall ſtain thy bridal day.

LYCIDAS.

The horrid thought ſinks deep into my ſoul,
And down my cheek unwilling ſorrows roll.

DIONE.

From this new flame you may as yet recede,
Or have you doom'd that guiltleſs maid ſhall bleed?

LYCIDAS.

Name her no more.—haſte, ſeek the ſylvan fair.

DIONE.

Should the rich profer tempt her liſt'ning ear,
Bid all your peace adieu. O barb'rous youth,
Can you forego your honour, love and truth?
Yet ſhould Parthenia wealth and title ſlight,
Would juſtice then reſtore Dione's right?
Would you then dry her ever-falling tears;
And bleſs with honeſt love your future years?

LYCIDAS.

I'll in yon' ſhade thy wiſh'd return attend;
Come quickly come, and cheer thy ſighing friend.
[Exit Lycidas.

DIONE.

Should her proud ſoul reſiſt the tempting bait,
Should ſhe contemn his profer'd wealth and ſtate,
Then I once more his perjur'd heart may move,
And in his boſom wake the dying love.
As the pale wretch involv'd in doubts and fears,
All trembling in the judgment-hall appears;
So ſhall I ſtand before Parthenia's eyes,
For as ſhe dooms, Dione lives or dies.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

LYCIDAS. PARTHENIA aſleep in a bower.

LYCIDAS.

MAY no rude wind the ruſtling branches move;
Breathe ſoft, ye ſilent gales, nor wake my love.
Ye ſhepherds, piping homeward on the way,
Let not the diſtant echoes learn your lay;
Strain not, ye nightingales, your warbling throat,
May no loud ſhake prolong the ſhriller note,
Leſt ſhe awake; O ſleep, ſecure her eyes,
That I may gaze; for if ſhe wake, ſhe flies.
While eaſy dreams compoſe her peaceful ſoul,
What anxious cares within my boſom roll!
If tir'd with ſighs beneath the beach I lye,
And languid ſlumber cloſe my weeping eye,
Her lovely viſion riſes to my view,
Swift flies the nymph, and ſwift would I purſue;
I ſtrive to call; my tongue has loſt its ſound;
Like rooted oaks, my feet benumb'd are bound;
Struggling I wake. again my ſorrows flow,
And not one flatt'ring dream deludes my woe.
What innocence! how meek is ev'ry grace!
How ſweet the ſmile that dimples on her face,
Calm as the ſleeping ſeas! but ſhould my ſighs
Too rudely breathe, what angry ſtorms would riſe!
Though the fair roſe with beauteous bluſh is crown'd,
Beneath her fragrant leaves the thorn is found;

The peach, that with inviting crimſon blooms,
Deep at the heart the cank'ring worm conſumes;
'Tis thus, alas! thoſe lovely features hide
Diſdain and anger and reſentful pride.

SCENE II.

LYCIDAS, DIONE. PARTHENIA.

LYCIDAS.

Hath profer'd greatneſs yet o'ercome her hate?
And does ſhe languiſh for the glitt'ring bait?
Againſt the ſwain ſhe might her pride ſupport.
Can ſhe ſubdue her ſex, and ſcorn a court?
Perhaps in dreams the ſhining viſion charms,
And the rich bracelet ſparkles on her arms;
In fancy'd heaps the golden treaſure glows:
Parthenia, wake, all this thy ſwain beſtows.

DIONE.

Sleeps ſhe in theſe cloſe bowers?

LYCIDAS.

——————————Lo! there ſhe lies.

DIONE.

O may no ſtartling ſound unſeal her eyes,
And drive her hence away. 'till now, in vain
I trod the winding wood and weary plain.
Hence, Lycidas; beyond thoſe ſhades repoſe,
While I thy fortune and thy birth diſcloſe.

LYCIDAS.

May I Parthenia to thy friendſhip owe!

DIONE.

O rather think on loſt Dione's woe!

Muſt ſhe thy broken faith for ever mourn,
And will that juſter paſſion ne'er return?

LYCIDAS.

Upbraid me not; but go. her ſlumbers chaſe;
And in her view the bright temptation place.

[Exit Lycidas.

SCENE III.

DIONE. PARTHENIA.

DIONE.

Now flames the weſtern sky with golden beams,
And the ray kindles on the quiv'ring ſtreams;
Long flights of crows, high croaking from their food,
Now ſeek the nightly covert of the wood;
The tender graſs with dewy cryſtal bends,
And gath'ring vapour from the heath aſcends.
Shake off this downy reſt; wake, gentle maid,
Truſt not thy charms beneath the noxious ſhade.
Parthenia, riſe.

PARTHENIA.

——————What voice alarms my ear?
Away. approach not. hay! Alexis there!
Let us together to the vales deſcend,
And to the folds our bleating charge attend;
But let me hear no more that ſhepherd's name,
Vex not my quiet with his hateful flame.

DIONE.

Can I behold him gaſping on the ground,
And ſeek no healing herb to ſtaunch the wound?

For thee continual ſighs conſume his heart,
'Tis you alone can cure the bleeding ſmart.
Once more I come the moving cauſe to plead,
If ſtill his ſuff'rings cannot intercede,
Yet let my friendſhip do his paſſion right,
And ſhow thy lover in his native light.

PARTHENIA.

Why in dark myſt'ry are thy words involv'd?
If Lycidas you mean; know, I'm reſolv'd.

DIONE.

Let not thy kindling rage my words reſtrain.
Know then; Parthenia ſlights no vulgar ſwain.
For thee he bears the ſcrip and ſylvan crook,
For thee the glories of a court forſook.
May not thy heart the wealthy flame decline!
His honours, his poſſeſſions, all are thine.

PARTHENIA.

If he's a courtier, O ye nymphs, beware;
Thoſe who moſt promiſe are the leaſt ſincere.
The quick-ey'd hawk ſhoots headlong from above,
And in his pounces bears the trembling dove;
The pilf'ring wolf o'er-leaps the fold's defence,
But the falſe courtier preys on innocence.
If he's a courtier, O ye nymphs, beware;
Thoſe who moſt promiſe are the leaſt ſincere.

DIONE.

Alas! thou ne'er haſt prov'd the ſweets of ſtate,
Nor known that female pleaſure, to be great.
'Tis for the town ripe cluſters load the poles,
And all our autumn crowns the courtier's bowles;
For him our woods the red-ey'd pheaſant breed,
And annual coveys in our harveſt feed;
For him with fruit the bending branch is ſtor'd,
Plenty pours all her bleſſings on his board,

If (when the market to the city calls)
We chance to paſs beſides his palace walls,
Does not his hall with muſic's voice reſound,
And the floor tremble with the dancer's bound?
Such are the pleaſures Lycidas ſhall give,
When thy relenting boſom bids him live.

PARTHENIA.

See yon gay goldfinch hop from ſpray to ſpray,
Who ſings a farewell to the parting day;
At large he flies o'er hill and dale and down:
Is not each buſh, each ſpreading tree his own?
And canſt thou think he'll quit his native brier,
For the bright cage o'er-arch'd with golden wire?
What then are honours, pomp and gold to me?
Are thoſe a price to purchaſe liberty!

DIONE.

Think, when the Hymeneal torch ſhall blaze,
And on the ſolemn rites the virgins gaze;
When thy fair locks with glitt'ring gems are grac'd,
And the bright zone ſhall ſparkle round thy waſte,
How will their hearts with envious ſorrow pine,
When Lycidas ſhall join his hand to thine!

PARTHENIA.

And yet, Alexis, all that pomp and ſhow
Are oft' the varniſh of internal woe.
When the chaſte lamb is from her ſiſters led,
And interwoven garlands paint her head;
The gazing flock, all envious of her pride,
Behold her skipping by the prieſteſs' ſide;
Each hopes the flow'ry wreath with longing eyes;
While ſhe, alas! is led to ſacrifice!
Thus walks the bride in all her ſtate array'd,
The gaze and envy of each thoughtleſs maid.

DIONE.

As yet her tongue resists the tempting snare,
And guards my panting bosom from despair. [Aside.
Can thy strong soul this noble flame forego?
Must such a lover waste his life in woe?

PARTHENIA.

Tell him, his gifts I scorn; not all his art,
Not all his flattery shall seduce my heart.
Courtiers, I know, are disciplin'd to cheat,
Their infant-lips are taught to lisp deceit;
To prey on easy nymphs they range the shade,
And vainly boast of innocence betray'd;
Chaste hearts, unlearn'd in falshood, they assail,
And think our ear will drink the grateful tale:
No. Lycidas shall ne'er my peace destroy,
I'll guard my virtue, and content enjoy.

DIONE.

So strong a passion in my bosom burns,
Whene'er his soul is griev'd, Alexis mourns!
Canst thou this importuning ardor blame?
Would not thy tongue for friendship urge the same?

PARTHENIA.

Yes, blooming swain. you show an honest mind;
I see it, with the purest flame refin'd.
Who shall compare love's mean and gross desire
To the chaste zeal of friendship's sacred fire?
By whining love our weakness is confest;
But stronger friendship shows a virtuous breast.
In folly's heart the short-liv'd blaze may glow,
Wisdom alone can purer friendship know.
Love is a sudden blaze which soon decays,
Friendship is like the sun's eternal rays;
Not daily benefits exhaust the flame,
It still is giving, and still burns the same;

And could Alexis from his ſoul remove
All the low images of groſſer love;
Such mild, ſuch gentle looks thy heart declare,
Fain would my breaſt thy faithful friendſhip ſhare.

DIONE.

How dare you in the diff'rent ſex confide?
And ſeek a friendſhip which you ne'er have try'd?

PARTHENIA.

Yes, I to thee could give up all my heart.
From thy chaſte eye no wanton glances dart;
Thy modeſt lips convey no thought impure,
With thee may ſtricteſt virtue walk ſecure.

DIONE.

Yet can I ſafely on the nymph depend,
Whoſe unrelenting ſcorn can kill my friend?

PARTHENIA.

Accuſe me not, who act a gen'rous part;
Had I, like city maids, a fraudful heart,
Then had his proffers taught my ſoul to feign,
Then had I vilely ſtoopt to ſordid gain,
Then had I ſigh'd for honours, pomp and gold,
And for unhappy chains my freedom ſold.
If you would ſave him, bid him leave the plain,
And to his native city turn again;
There, ſhall his paſſion find a ready cure,
There, not one dame reſiſts the glitt'ring lure.

DIONE.

All this I frequent urg'd, but urg'd in vain.
Alas! thou only canſt aſſwage his pain!

SCENE IV.

DIONE. PARTHENIA. LYCIDAS. [listening.

LYCIDAS.

Why ſtays Alexis? can my boſom bear
Thus long alternate ſtorms of hope and fear?
Yonder they walk; now frowns her brow diſguiſe,
But love conſenting ſparkles in her eyes;
Here will I liſten, here, impatient wait.
Spare me, Parthenia, and reſign thy hate. [Aſide.

PARTHENIA.

When Lycidas ſhall to the court repair,
Still let Alexis love his fleecy care;
Still let him chooſe cool grots and ſylvan bowers,
And let Parthenia ſhare his peaceful hours.

LYCIDAS.

What do I hear? my friendſhip is betray'd!
The treach'rous rival has ſeduc'd the maid. [Aſide.

PARTHENIA.

With thee, where bearded goats deſcend the ſteep,
Or where, like winter's ſnow, the nibbling ſheep
Clothe the ſlope hills: I'll paſs the cheerful day,
And from thy reed my voice ſhall catch the lay.
But ſee, ſtill ev'ning ſpreads her dusky wings,
The flocks, ſlow-moving from the miſty ſprings,
Now ſeek their fold. come, ſhepherd, let's away,
To cloſe the lateſt labours of the day.

[Exeunt hand in hand.

SCENE V.

LYCIDAS.

My troubled heart what dire diſaſters rend ?
A ſcornful miſtreſs, and a treach'rous friend !
Would ye be couzen'd, more than woman can;
Unlock your boſom to perfidious man.
One faithful woman have theſe eyes beheld,
And againſt her this perjur'd heart rebell'd:
But ſearch as far as earth's wide bounds extend,
Where ſhall the wretched find one faithful friend ?

SCENE VI.

LYCIDAS. DIONE.

LYCIDAS.

Why ſtarts the ſwain ? why turn his eyes away,
As if amidſt his path the viper lay ?
Did I not to thy charge my heart confide ?
Did I not truſt thee near Parthenia's ſide,
As here ſhe ſlept ?

DIONE.

——————————She ſtraight my call obey'd,
And downy ſlumber left the lovely maid !
As in the morn awakes the folded roſe,
And all around her breathing colour throws;

So wak'd Parthenia.

LYCIDAS.

——————Could thy guarded heart,
When her full beauty glow'd, put by the dart?
Yet on Alexis let my ſoul depend.
'Tis moſt ungen'rous to ſuſpect a friend;
And thou, I hope, haſt well that name profeſt.

DIONE.

O could thy piercing eye diſcern my breaſt!
Couldſt thou the ſecrets of my boſom ſee,
There ev'ry thought is fill'd with cares for thee!

LYCIDAS.

Is there, againſt hypocriſy, defence,
Who clothes her words and looks with innocence!
[Aſide.
Say, ſhepherd, when you profer'd wealth and ſtate,
Did not her ſcorn and ſuppled pride abate?

DIONE.

As ſparkling di'monds to the feather'd train,
Who ſcrape the winnow'd chaff in ſearch of grain;
Such to the ſhepherdeſs the court appears:
Content ſhe ſeeks, and ſpurns thoſe glitt'ring cares.

LYCIDAS.

'Tis not in woman grandeur to deſpiſe,
'Tis not from courts, from me alone ſhe flies,
Did not my paſſion ſuffer like diſgrace,
While ſhe believ'd me born of ſylvan race?
Doſt thou not think, this proudeſt of her kind
Has to ſome rival ſwain her heart reſign'd?

DIONE.

No rival ſhepherd her diſdain can move;
Her frozen boſom is averſe to love.

LYCIDAS.

Say, art thou ſure, that this ungrateful fair
Scorns all alike, bids all alike deſpair?

DIONE.

How can I know the ſecrets of her heart?

LYCIDAS.

Anſwer ſincere, nor from the queſtion ſtart.
Say, in her glance was never love confeſt,
And is no ſwain diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt?

DIONE.

O Lycidas, bid all thy troubles ceaſe;
Let not a thought on her diſturb thy peace.
May juſtice bid thy former paſſion wake;
Think how Dione ſuffers for thy ſake:
Let not a broken oath thy honour ſtain,
Recall thy vows, and ſeek the town again.

LYCIDAS.

What means Alexis? where's thy friendſhip flown?
Why am I baniſh'd to the hateful town?
Hath ſome new ſhepherd warm'd Parthenia's breaſt?
And does my love his am'rous hours moleſt?
Is it for this thou bid'ſt me quit the plain?
Yes, yes, thou fondly lov'ſt this rival ſwain.
When firſt my cheated ſoul thy friendſhip woo'd,
To my warm heart I took the vip'rous brood.
O falſe Alexis!

DIONE.

——————————Why am I accus'd?
Thy jealous mind is by weak fears abus'd.

LYCIDAS.

Was not thy boſom fraught with falſe deſign?
Didſt thou not plead his cauſe, and give up mine?
Let not thy tongue evaſive anſwer ſeek;
The conſcious crimſon riſes on thy cheek:

Thy coward conſcience, by thy guilt diſmay'd,
Shakes in each joint, and owns that I'm betray'd.

DIONE.

How my poor heart is wrong'd! O ſpare thy friend!

LYCIDAS.

Seek not detected falſhood to defend.

DIONE.

Beware; leſt blind ſuſpicion raſhly blame.

LYCIDAS.

Own thyſelf then the rival of my flame.
If this be ſhe for whom Alexis pin'd,
She now no more is to thy vows unkind,
Behind the thicket's twiſted verdure laid,
I witneſs'd ev'ry tender thing ſhe ſaid;
I ſaw bright pleaſure kindle in her eyes,
Love warm'd each feature at thy ſoft replies.

DIONE.

Yet hear me ſpeak.

LYCIDAS.

——————————In vain is all defence.
Did not thy treach'rous hand conduct her hence?
Haſte, from my ſight, rage burns in ev'ry vein;
Never approach my juſt revenge again.

DIONE.

O ſearch my heart; there injur'd truth thou'lt find.

LYCIDAS.

Talk not of truth; long ſince ſhe left mankind.
So ſmooth a tongue! and yet ſo falſe a heart!
Sure courts firſt taught the fawning friendſhip's art!
No, thou art falſe by nature.

DIONE.

——————————Let me clear
This heavy charge, and prove my truſt ſincere.

LYCIDAS.

Boaſt then her favours; ſay, what happy hour
Next calls to meet her in th' appointed bower;
Say when and where you met.

DIONE.

——————————Be rage ſuppreſt.
In ſtabbing mine, you wound Parthenia's breaſt,
She ſaid, ſhe ſtill defy'd love's keeneſt dart;
Yet purer friendſhip might divide her heart,
Friendſhip's ſincerer bands ſhe wiſh'd to prove.

LYCIDAS.

A woman's friendſhip ever ends in love.
Think not theſe fooliſh tales my faith command;
Did not I ſee thee preſs her ſnowy hand?
O may her paſſion like thy friendſhip laſt!
May ſhe betray thee ere the day be paſt!
Hence then. away. thou'rt hateful to my ſight,
And thus I ſpurn the fawning hypocrite. [Ex. Lycid.

SCENE VII.

DIONE.

Was ever grief like mine! O wretched maid!
My friendſhip wrong'd! my conſtant love betray'd!
Misfortune haunts my ſteps where-e'er I go,
And all my days are over-caſt with woe.
Long have I ſtrove th' increaſing load to bear,
Now faints my ſoul, and ſinks into deſpair.
O lead me to the hanging mountain's cell,
In whoſe brown cliffs the fowls of darkneſs dwell:

Where waters, trickling down the rifted wall,
Shall lull my ſorrows with the tinkling fall.
There, ſeek thy grave. how canſt thou bear the light,
When baniſh'd ever from Evander's ſight!

SCENE VIII.

DIONE. LAURA.

LAURA.

Why hangs a cloud of grief upon thy brows?
Does the proud nymph accept Evander's vows?

DIONE.

Can I bear life with theſe new pangs oppreſt!
Again he tears me from his faithleſs breaſt:
A perjur'd lover firſt he ſought theſe plains,
And now my friendſhip like my love diſdains.
As I new offers to Parthenia made,
Conceal'd he ſtood behind the woodbine ſhade.
He ſays, my treach'rous tongue his heart betray'd,
That my falſe ſpeeches have miſled the maid;
With groundleſs fear he thus his ſoul deceives;
What frenzy dictates, jealouſy believes.

LAURA.

Reſign thy crook, put off this manly veſt,
And let the wrong'd Dione ſtand confeſt;
When he ſhall learn what ſorrows thou haſt born,
And find that naught relents Parthenia's ſcorn,
Sure he will pity thee.

DIONE.

——————————No, Laura, no.
Should I, alas! the ſylvan dreſs forego,
Then might he think that I her pride foment,
That injur'd love inſtructs me to reſent;
Our ſecret enterprize might fatal prove:
Man flies the plague of perſecuting love.

LAURA.

Avoid Parthenia; leſt his rage grow warm,
And jealouſy reſolve ſome fatal harm.

DIONE.

O Laura, if thou chance the youth to find,
Tell him what torments vex my anxious mind;
Should I once more his awful preſence ſeek,
The ſilent tears would bath my glowing cheek;
By riſing ſighs my falt'ring voice be ſtay'd,
And trembling fear too ſoon confeſs the maid.
Haſte, Laura, then; his vengeful ſoul aſſwage,
Tell him, I'm guiltleſs; cool his blinded rage;
Tell him, that truth ſincere my friendſhip brought.
Let him not cheriſh one ſuſpicious thought.
Then to convince him, his diſtruſt was vain,
I'll never, never ſee that nymph again.
This way he went.

LAURA.

——————————See, at the call of night,
The ſtar of ev'ning ſhades his ſilver light
High o'er yon weſtern hill: the cooling gales
Freſh odours breathe along the winding dales;
Far from their home as yet our ſhepherds ſtray,
To cloſe with chearful walk the ſultry day.
Methinks from far I hear the piping ſwain;
Hark, in the breeze now ſwells, now ſinks the ſtrain;
Thither I'll ſeek him.

DIONE.

——————— While this length of glade
Shall lead me penſive through the ſable ſhade;
Where on the branches murmur ruſhing winds,
Grateful as falling floods to love-ſick minds.
O may this path to death's dark vale deſcend!
There only can the wretched hope a friend.

[Exeunt ſeverally.

ACT V. SCENE I.

A WOOD.

DIONE. CLEANTHES, (who lies wounded in a diſtant part of the ſtage.)

DIONE.

THE moon ſerene now climbs th' aerial way;
See, at her ſight ten thouſand ſtars decay:
With trembling gleam ſhe tips the ſilent grove,
While all beneath the chequer'd ſhadows move.
Turn back thy ſilver axles, downward roll,
Darkneſs beſt fits the horrors of my ſoul.
Riſe, riſe, ye clouds; the face of heav'n deform,
Veil the bright goddeſs in a ſable ſtorm:
O look not down upon a wretched maid!
Let thy bright torch the happy lover aid,
And light his wand'ring footſteps to the bower,
Where the kind nymph attends th' appointed hour.
Yet thou haſt ſeen unhappy love, like mine;
Did not thy lamp in heav'n's blue forehead ſhine,
When Thisbe ſought her love along the glade?
Didſt thou not then behold the gleaming blade,
And gild the fatal point that ſtabb'd her breaſt?
Soon I, like her, ſhall ſeek the realms of reſt.
Let groves of mournful yew a wretch ſurround!
O ſooth my ear with melancholy ſound!

The village curs now ſtretch their yelling throat,
And dogs from diſtant cots return the note;
The rav'nous wolf along the valley prowls,
And with his famiſh'd cries the mountain howls.
But hark! what ſudden noiſe advances near?
Repeated groans alarm my frighted ear!

CLEANTHES.

Shepherd, approach; ah! fly not through the glade,
A wretch all dy'd with wounds invokes thy aid.

DIONE.

Say then, unhappy ſtranger, how you bled;
Collect thy ſpirits, raiſe thy drooping head.
[Cleanthes raiſes himſelf on his arm.
O horrid ſight! Cleanthes gaſping lies;
And death's black ſhadows float before his eyes.
Unknown in this diſguiſe, I'll check my woe,
And learn what bloody hand has ſtruck the blow.
[Aſide.
Say, youth, ere fate thy feeble voice confounds,
What led thee hither? whence theſe purple wounds?

CLEANTHES.

Stay, fleeting life; may ſtrength a-while prevail,
Leſt my clos'd lips confine th' imperfect tale.
Ere the ſtreak'd eaſt grew warm with amber ray,
I from the city took my doubtful way,
Far o'er the plains I ſought a beauteous maid,
Who from the court in theſe wide foreſts ſtray'd,
Wanders unknown; as I, with weary pain,
Try'd ev'ry path, and op'ning glade in vain;
A band of thieves, forth ruſhing from the wood,
Unſheath'd their daggers warm with daily blood;
Deep in my breaſt the barb'rous ſteel is dy'd,
And purple hands the golden prey divide.
Hence are theſe mangling wounds. ſay, gentle ſwain,

If thou haſt known among the ſylvan train
The vagrant nymph I ſeek?

DIONE.

——————————What mov'd thy care,
Thus, in theſe pathleſs wilds to ſearch the fair?

CLEANTHES.

I charge you, O ye daughters of the grove,
Ye Naiads, who the moſſy fountains love,
Ye happy ſwains, who range the paſtures wide,
Ye tender nymphs, who feed your flocks beſide;
If my laſt gaſping breath can pity move,
If e'er ye knew the pangs of ſlighted love,
Show her I charge you, where Cleanthes dy'd,
The graſs yet reeking with the ſanguine tide.
A father's power to me the virgin gave,
But ſhe diſdain'd to live a nuptial ſlave;
So fled her native home.

DIONE.

——————————'Tis then from thee
Springs the foul ſource of all her miſery.
Could'ſt thou, thy ſelfiſh appetite to pleaſe,
Condemn to endleſs woes another's peace?

CLEANTHES.

O ſpare me; nor my hapleſs love upbraid,
While on my heart death's frozen hand is laid!
Go ſeek her, guide her where Cleanthes bled;
When ſhe ſurveys her lover pale and dead,
Tell her, that ſince ſhe fled my hateful ſight,
Without remorſe I ſought the realms of night.
Methinks I ſee her view theſe poor remains,
And on her cheek indecent gladneſs reigns!
Full in her preſence cold Cleanthes lies,
And not one tear ſtands trembling in her eyes!

O let a ſigh my hapleſs fate deplore!
Cleanthes now controuls thy love no more.

DIONE.

How ſhall my lids confine theſe riſing woes? [Aſide.

CLEANTHES.

O might I ſee her, ere death's finger cloſe
Theſe eyes for ever! might her ſoften'd breaſt
Forgive my love with too much ardor preſt!
Then I with peace could yield my lateſt breath.

DIONE.

Shall I not calm the ſable hour of death,
And ſhow my ſelf before him!—hah! he dies.
See from his trembling lip the ſpirit flies! [Aſide.
Stay yet a-while. Dione ſtands confeſt.
He knows me not. he faints, he ſinks to reſt.

CLEANTHES.

Tell her, ſince all my hopes in her were loſt,
That death was welcome——— [Dies.

DIONE.

What ſudden guſts of grief my boſom rend?
A parent's curſes o'er my head impend
For diſobedient vows; O wretched maid,
Thoſe very vows Evander hath betray'd.
See, at thy feet Cleanthes bath'd in blood!
For love of thee he trod this lonely wood;
Thou art the cruel authreſs of his fate!
He falls by thine, thou by Evander's hate.
When ſhall my ſoul know reſt? Cleanthes ſlain
No longer ſighs and weeps for thy diſdain.
Thou ſtill art curſt with love. bleed, virgin, bleed.
How ſhall a wretch from anxious life be freed!
My troubled brain with ſudden frenzy burns,
And ſhatter'd thought now this now that way turns.

What do I ſee thus glitt'ring on the plains?
Hah! the dread ſword yet warm with crimſon ſtains!
[Takes up the dagger.

SCENE II.

DIONE. PARTHENIA.

PARTHENIA.

Sweet is the walk when night has cool'd the hour.
This path directs me to my ſylvan bower. [Aſide.

DIONE.

Why is my ſoul with ſudden fear diſmay'd?
Why drops my trembling hand the pointed blade?
O ſtring my arm with force! [Aſide.

PARTHENIA.

——————————Methought a noiſe
Broke through the ſilent air, like human voice. [Aſide.

DIONE.

One well-aim'd blow ſhall all my pangs remove,
Graſp firm the fatal ſteel, and ceaſe to love. [Aſide.

PARTHENIA.

Sure 'twas Alexis, hah! a ſword diſplay'd!
The ſtreaming luſtre darts a-croſs the ſhade. [Aſide.

DIONE.

May heav'n new vigour to my ſoul impart,
And guide the deſp'rate weapon to my heart! [Aſide.

PARTHENIA.

May I the meditated death arreſt!
[Holds Dione's hand.
Strike not raſh ſhepherd; ſpare thy guiltleſs breaſt.

Which I ſo often ſwore. vain world, adieu!
Though I was falſe in life, in death I'm true. [Dies.

LAURA.

To-morrow ſhall the funeral rites be paid,
And theſe love-victims in one grave be laid.

PARTHENIA.

There ſhall the yew her ſable branches ſpread,
And mournful cypreſs rear her fringed head.

LAURA.

From thence ſhall thyme and myrtle ſend perfume,
And laurel ever green o'erſhade the tomb.

PARTHENIA.

Come, Laura; let us leave this horrid wood,
Where ſtreams the purple graſs with lovers blood;
Come to my bower. and as we ſorrowing go,
Let poor Dione's ſtory feed my woe
With heart-relieving tears.——

LAURA. [Pointing to Dione.

——————————Unhappy maid,
Hadſt thou a parent's juſt command obey'd,
Thou yet hadſt liv'd.—but who ſhall love adviſe?
Love ſcorns command, and breaks all other tyes.
Henceforth, ye ſwains, be true to vows profeſt;
For certain vengeance ſtrikes the perjur'd breaſt.

FINIS.

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